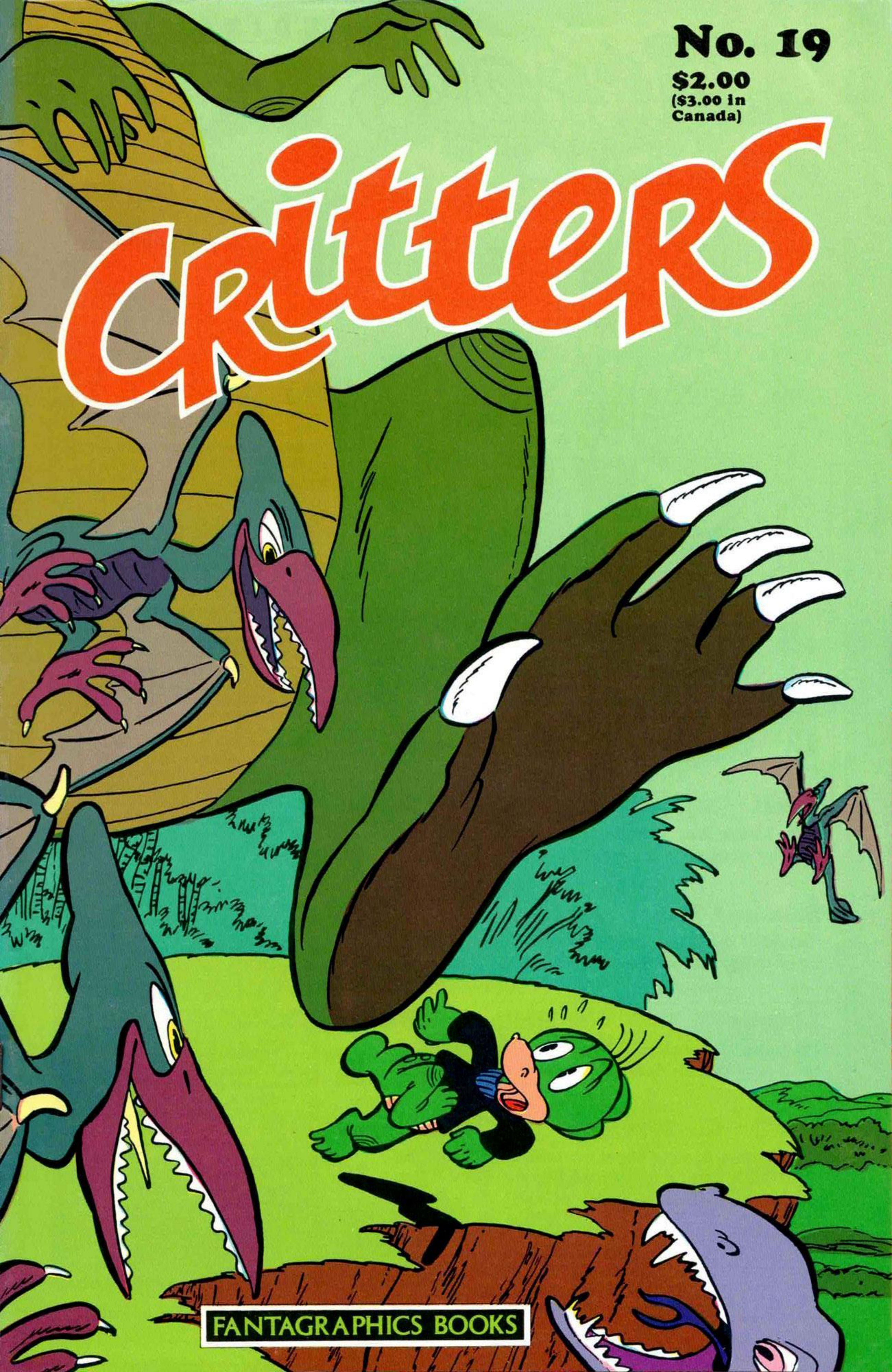

No. 19
$2.00
($3.00 in Canada)
critters
FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Critters

© 1987 Steve Purcell

NUMBER 19 **DECEMBER 1987**

C O N T E N T S

Gnuff **by Freddy Milton**
"The Living Past" Gnuff applies for a new job and Gnicky goes on a too-exciting field trip **1**

Sam and Max **by Steve Purcell**
"Night of the Cringing Wildebeest" Sam and Max have merry fun at the carnival **13**

Lizards **by Holland & Wilber**
"Repairs" Dweezil and Bear continue their quest for a way out of Memphis—preferably flying **18**

Fission Chicken **by J.P. Morgan**
"Marketing Experts From Beyond, Part 1" At the mall, Fish begins to unravel a conspiracy **22**

Critters #19, December, 1987. Editor, Kim Thompson. Art Director, Doug Erb. Production Assistant, Coco Shinomiya. **Critters** is published monthly by Fantagraphics Books, Inc., and is copyright © 1987 Fantagraphics Books, Inc. All characters, stories, and art © 1987 their respective creators: J. Holland and R. Wilber, Freddy Milton, J.P. Morgan, Steve Purcell. Cover separations by Freddy Milton; back cover separations by Coco Shinomiya. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without written permission from Fantagraphics Books and the creators. No similarity between the any of the names, characters, persons, animals, and institutions in **Critters** and those of any living or dead persons or beasties is intended, and any such similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. Letters to **Critters** become the property of the magazine and are assumed intended for publication in whole or in part, and may therefore be used for those purposes. First printing: September, 1987. Available directly from the publisher for $2.00 + 75¢ postage and handling: Fantagraphics Books, 1800 Bridgegate Street Suite #101, Westlake Village, CA 91361.

EDITORIAL

© 1987 Reed Waller and Kate Worley

A few changes this time around. Specifically, the new "Speakingstone" serial by Reed Waller and Kate Worley has been delayed by one issue due to Forces Beyond Anyone's Control. (Boy, it's a good thing I scheduled the Waller cover—reproduced at the top of the column—for next issue, huh?) Now, that's too bad for all of you who've been looking forward to this series (and I even listed it in our "back issues" in a few spots, silly me)...but on the plus side, Kate tells me that the story has grown from three to four episodes in the meantime, so that it will finish up in #23, the special Christmas issue—details of which I'll reveal next issue.

As a result of this (and another scheduling glitch on my part, but we won't talk about that one), you'll find the first chapter of J.P. Morgan's epic "Fission Chicken" novel, originally scheduled for next issue, debuting on page 22. Also, in order to fill a three-page gap in the middle of the issue, I've called in the Freelance Police.

Let me explain. A couple of months back, I received an advance Xerox of the premiere issue of Steve Purcell's **Sam and Max, Freelance Police** from Fishwrap Productions (you know, the guys who do **Fish Police**). Well, **SaMFP** was about funniest damn thing I'd read in ages. So between chortles and guffaws, I managed to call up Fishwrap's Steve Moncuse and wheedle Purcell's phone number out of him ("for research purposes," as I put it). I called Steve P. and, resisting the urge to tell him that Fishwrap had sunk into the wine-dark seas and Fantagraphics Books was going to publish **Sam and Max** now, I told him how great I thought his book was and suggested that maybe some day he could do a little something for **Critters**. He was wildly enthusiastic ("well, maybe, I guess...") and so, when it turned out I needed a few pages for this

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 32)

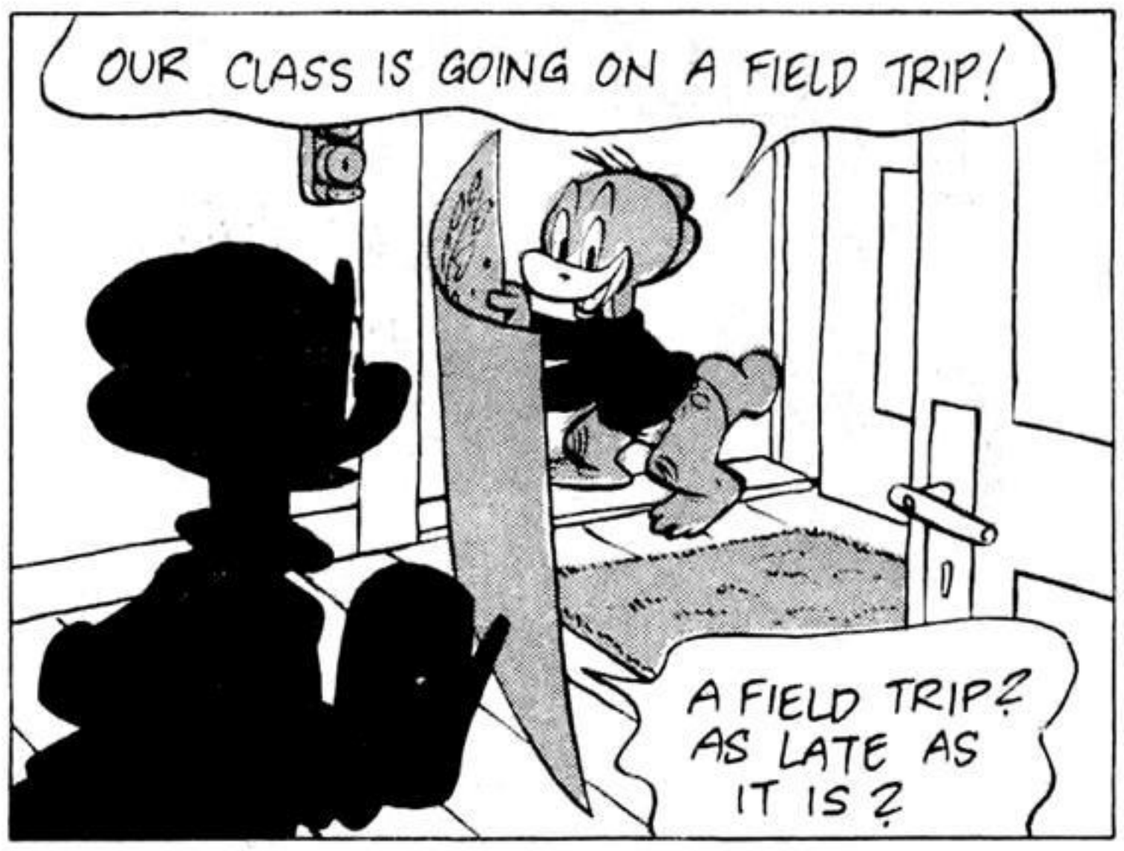
Freddy Milton's Gnuff

"THE LIVING PAST"

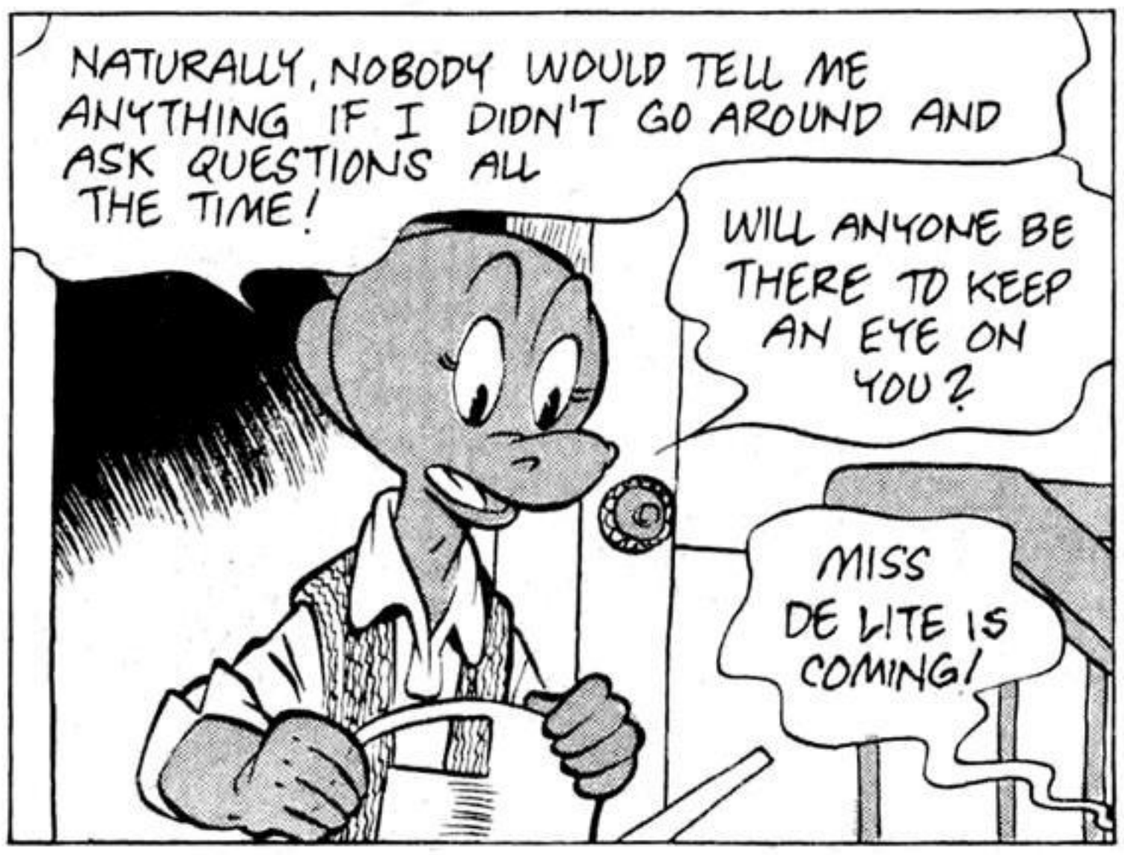
ART & STORY BY MILTON

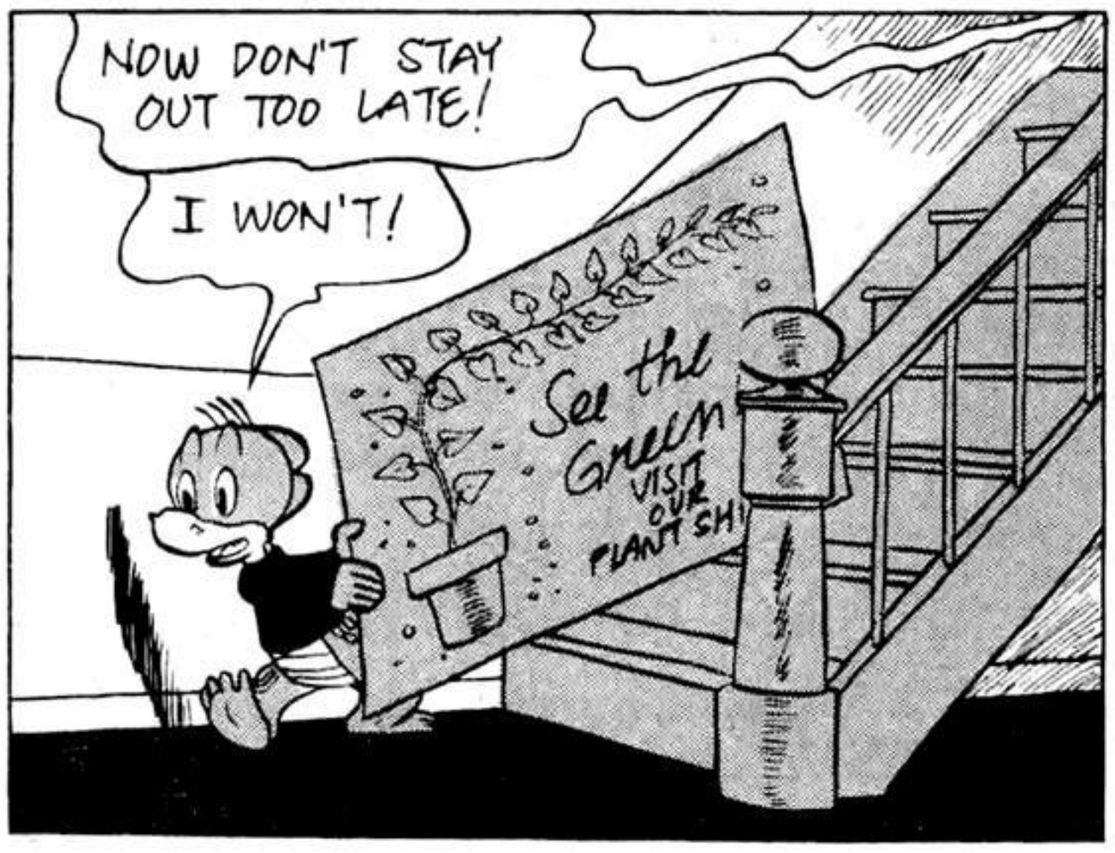
TRANSLATED BY DWIGHT R. DECKER

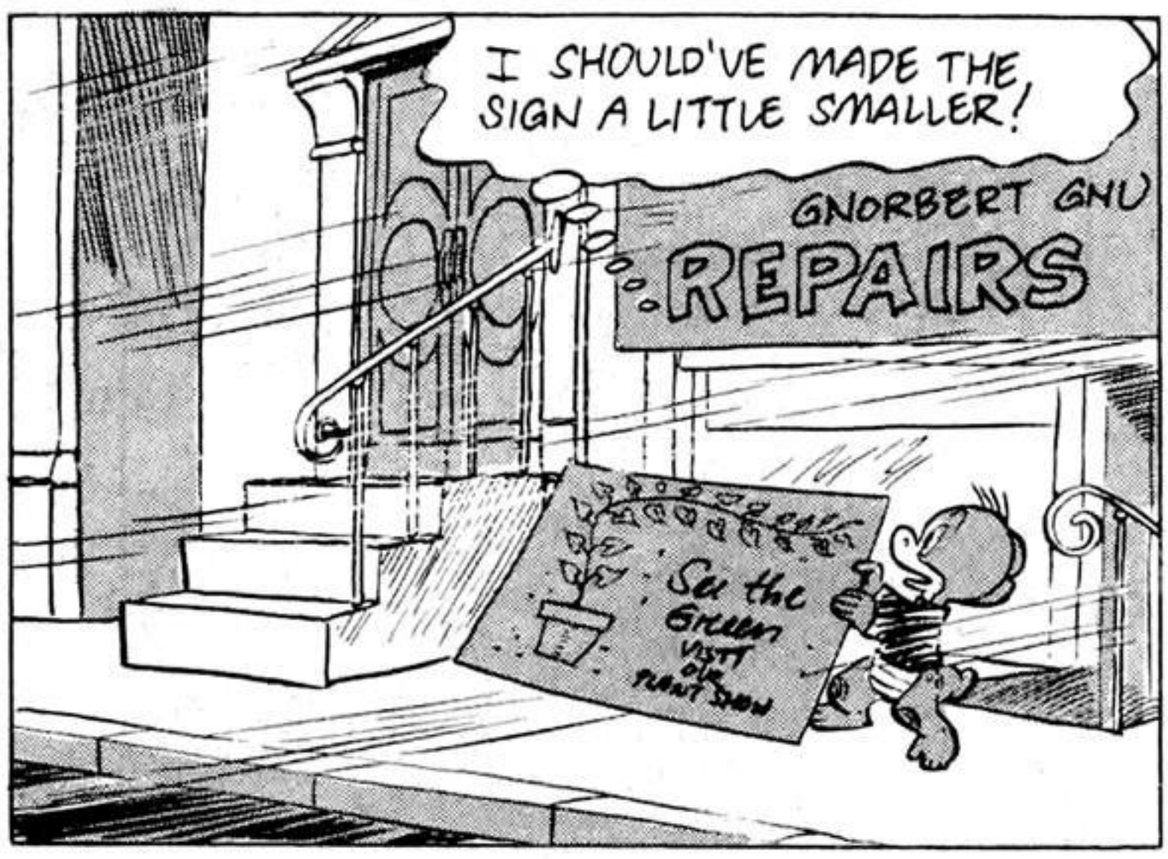
I'M DONE NOW! I'LL TAKE IT ALONG WITH ME!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, GNICKY?

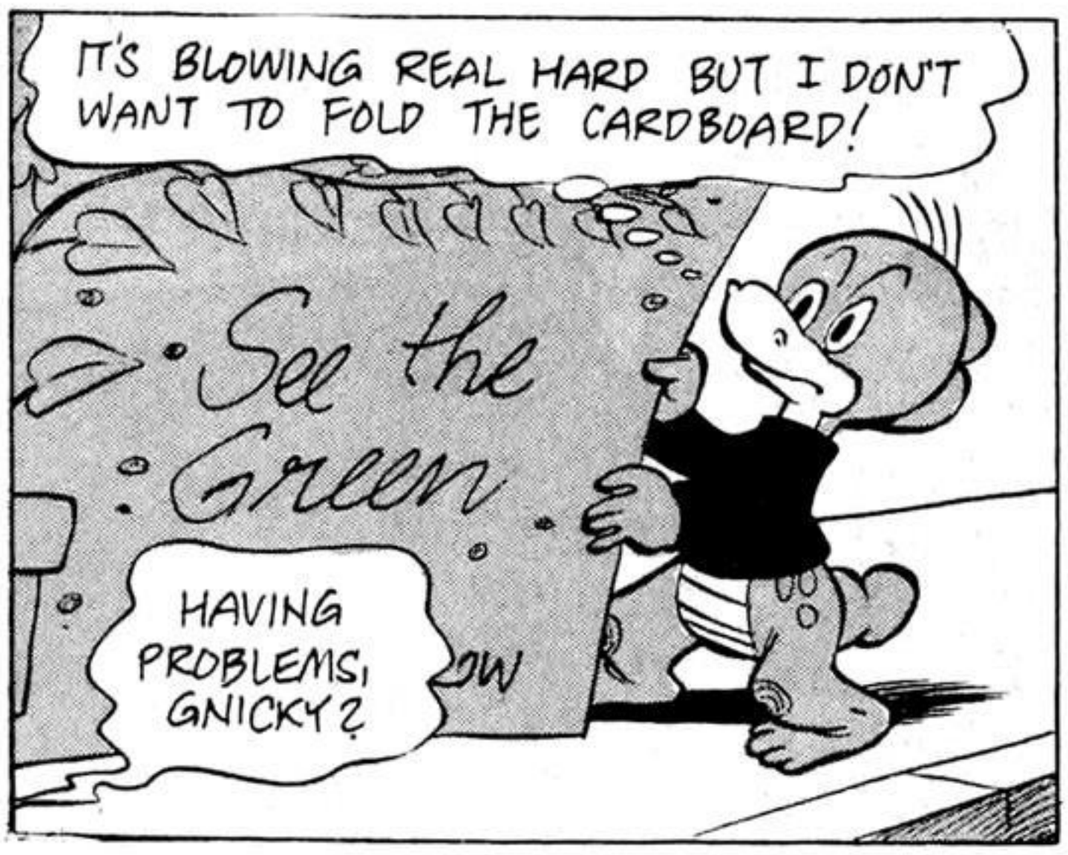

OUR CLASS IS GOING ON A FIELD TRIP!
A FIELD TRIP? AS LATE AS IT IS?

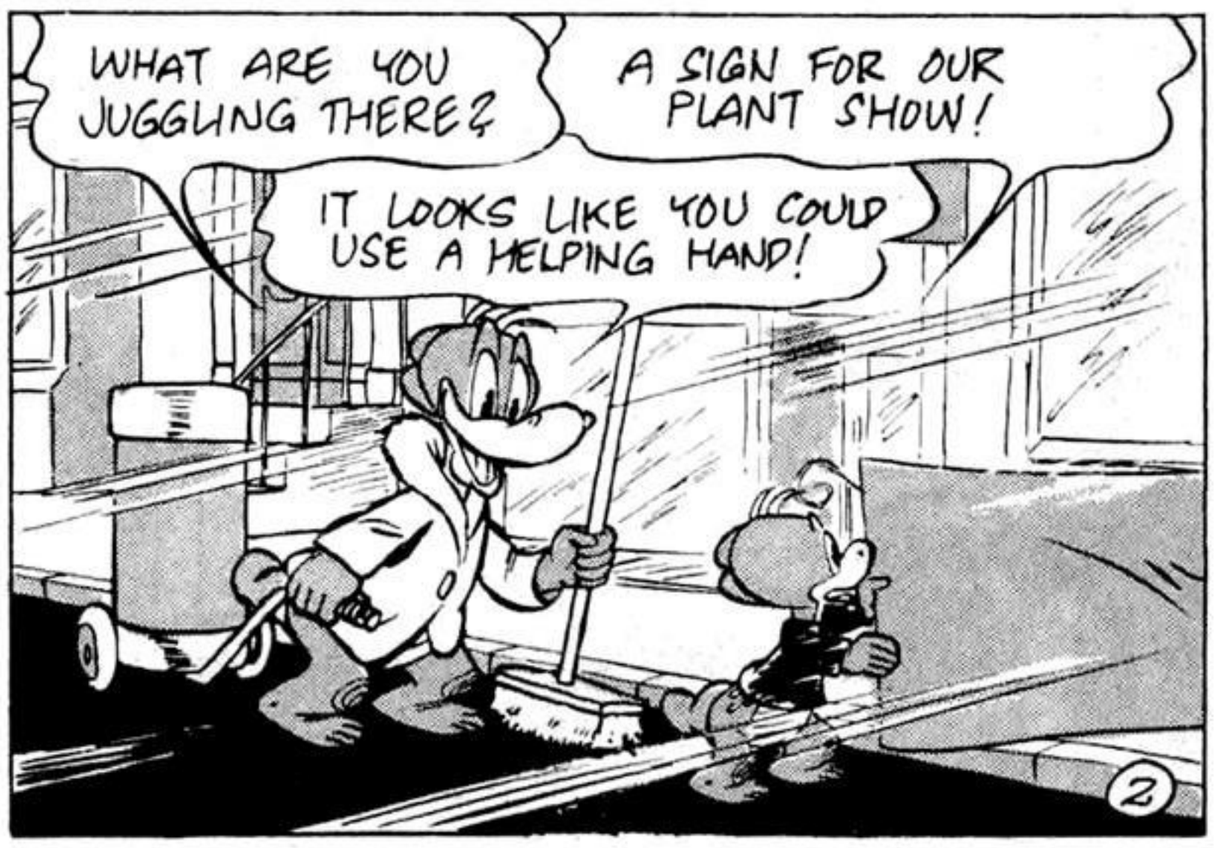
WE HAVE TO MEET AT CITY HALL TO SEE AN EXHIBITION... SCHOOLS VISITS ARE AFTER OPENING HOURS...
BE CAREFUL, GNICKY!


NATURALLY, NOBODY WOULD TELL ME ANYTHING IF I DIDN'T GO AROUND AND ASK QUESTIONS ALL THE TIME!
WILL ANYONE BE THERE TO KEEP AN EYE ON YOU?
MISS DE LITE IS COMING!


NOW DON'T STAY OUT TOO LATE!
I WON'T!
See the Green


I SHOULD'VE MADE THE SIGN A LITTLE SMALLER!
GNORBERT GNU
REPAIRS
See the Green


IT'S BLOWING REAL HARD BUT I DON'T WANT TO FOLD THE CARDBOARD!
See the Green
HAVING PROBLEMS, GNICKY?


WHAT ARE YOU JUGGLING THERE?
A SIGN FOR OUR PLANT SHOW!
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU COULD USE A HELPING HAND!

WE'LL JUST ROLL IT A LITTLE AND TUCK IT INTO THE GARBAGE CAN HERE!
DON'T GET IT DIRTY! IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO MAKE IT AN' IT WAS A WHOLE LOT OF WORK!
VISIT OUR PLANT

I'M HEADED THIS WAY, TOO! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
OVER TO CITY HALL!

I'M GOING TO CITY HALL MYSELF... TO PUT IN AN APPLICATION!
AN APPLICATION ?

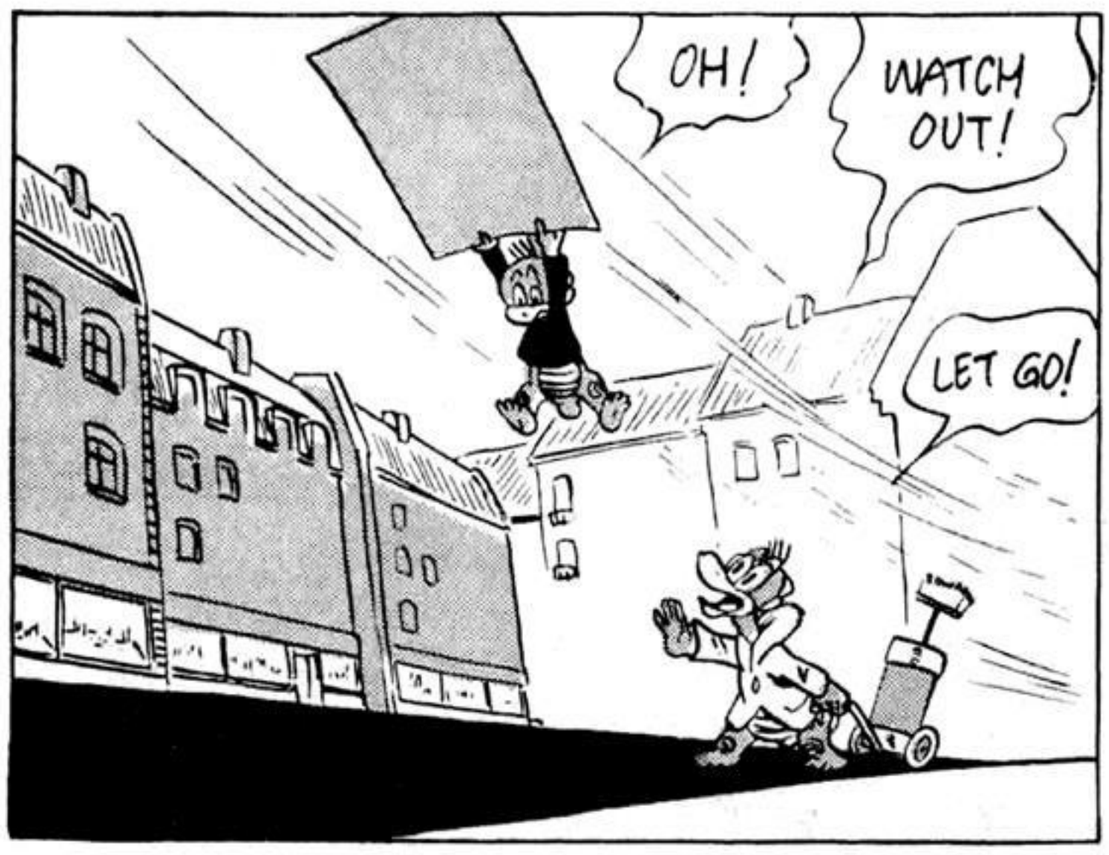
OH NO! THE SIGN!

IT'S BLOWING AWAY!
THAT GUST OF WIND GOT IT!

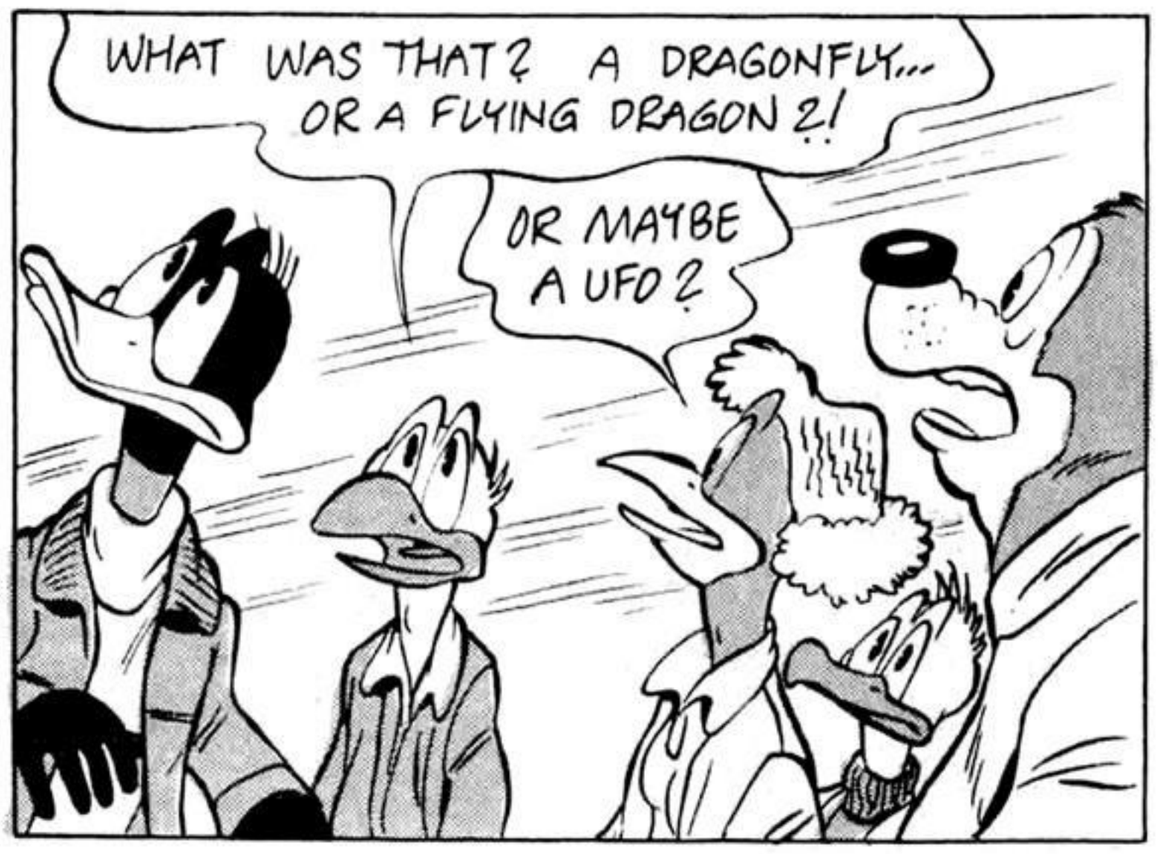
EXCUSE ME!
WHA?!
HEY! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU TWO?!

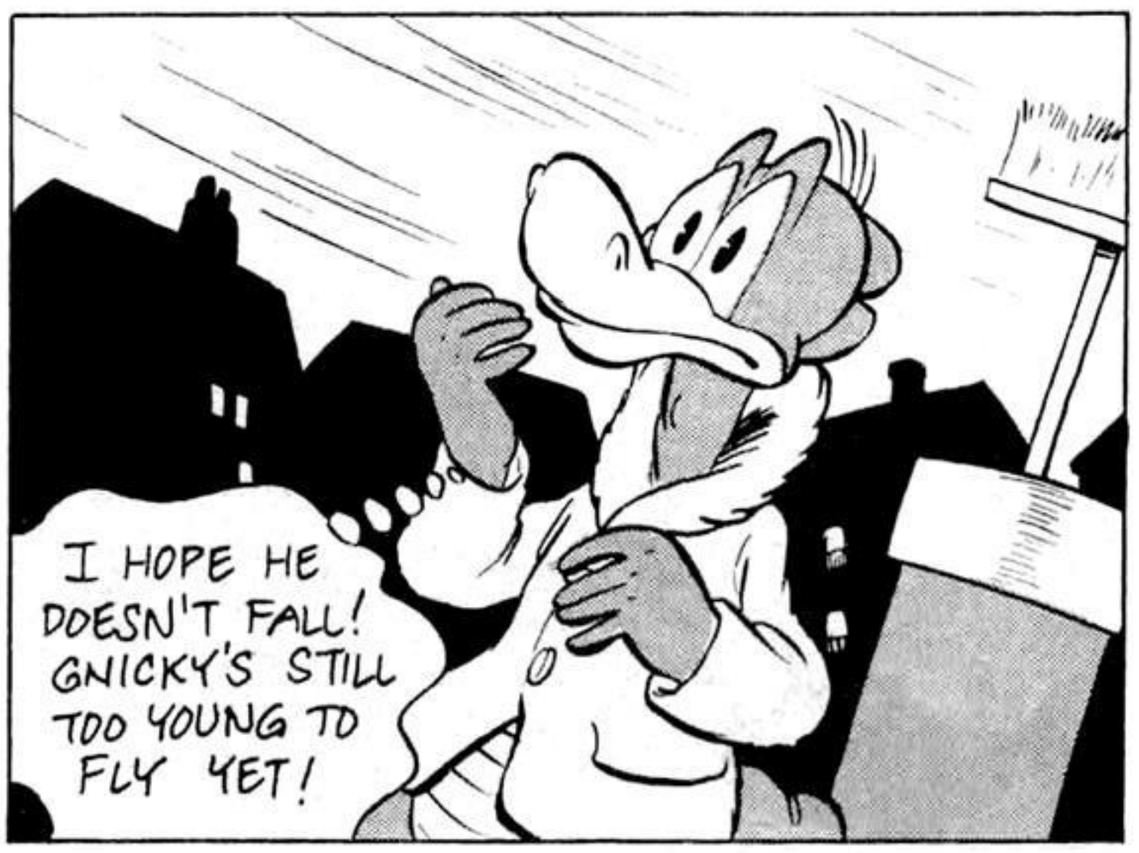
ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, I BET!
WELL, WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM A BUNCH OF DRAGONS?

I GOT IT!
WAY TO GO, GNICKY!


OH!
WATCH OUT!
LET GO!

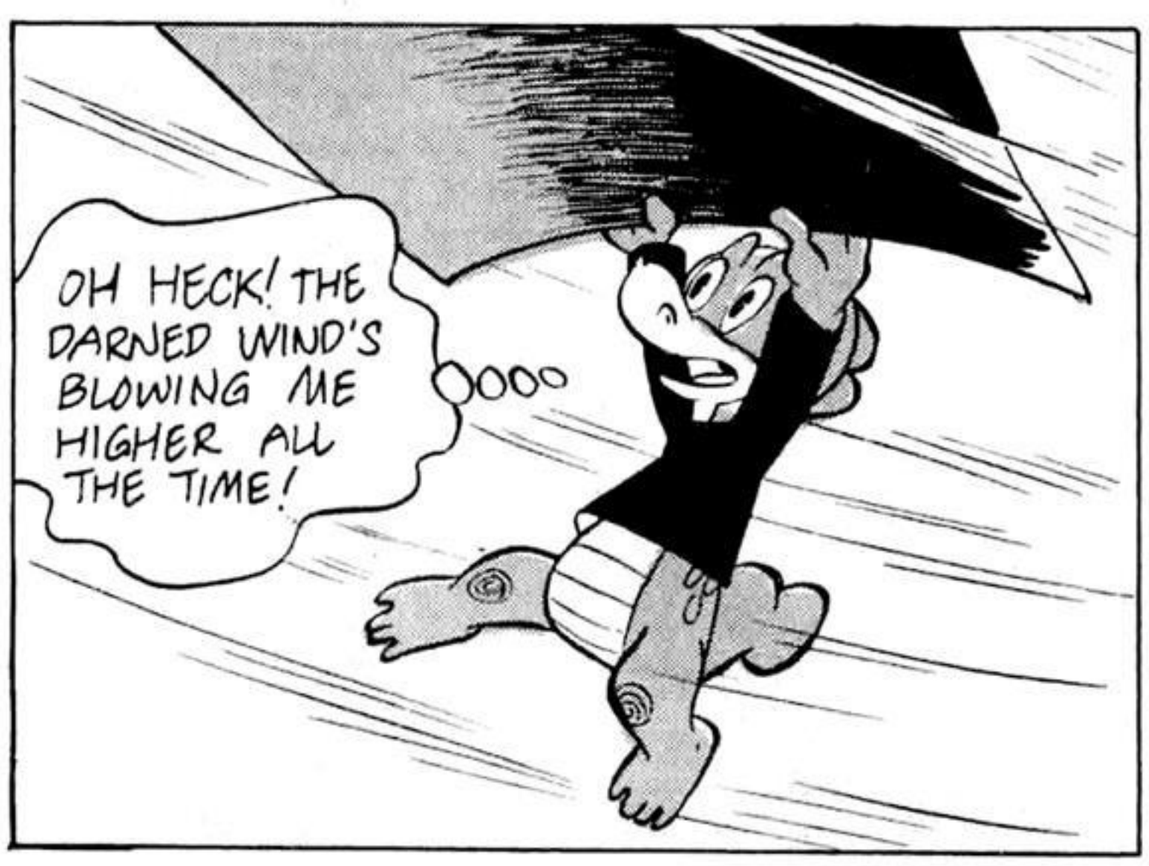
NO! SCRATCH THAT! HOLD ON, GNICKY!
HELP!


WHAT WAS THAT? A DRAGONFLY... OR A FLYING DRAGON?!
OR MAYBE A UFO?


I HOPE HE DOESN'T FALL! GNICKY'S STILL TOO YOUNG TO FLY YET!

AND THERE'S TOO MANY PEOPLE AROUND FOR ME TO TRY IT MYSELF! BESIDES, I'M OUT OF PRACTICE!

I'LL JUST HAVE TO FOLLOW HIM ON THE GROUND THE BEST I CAN AND HOPE HE LANDS OKAY!


OH HECK! THE DARNED WIND'S BLOWING ME HIGHER ALL THE TIME!

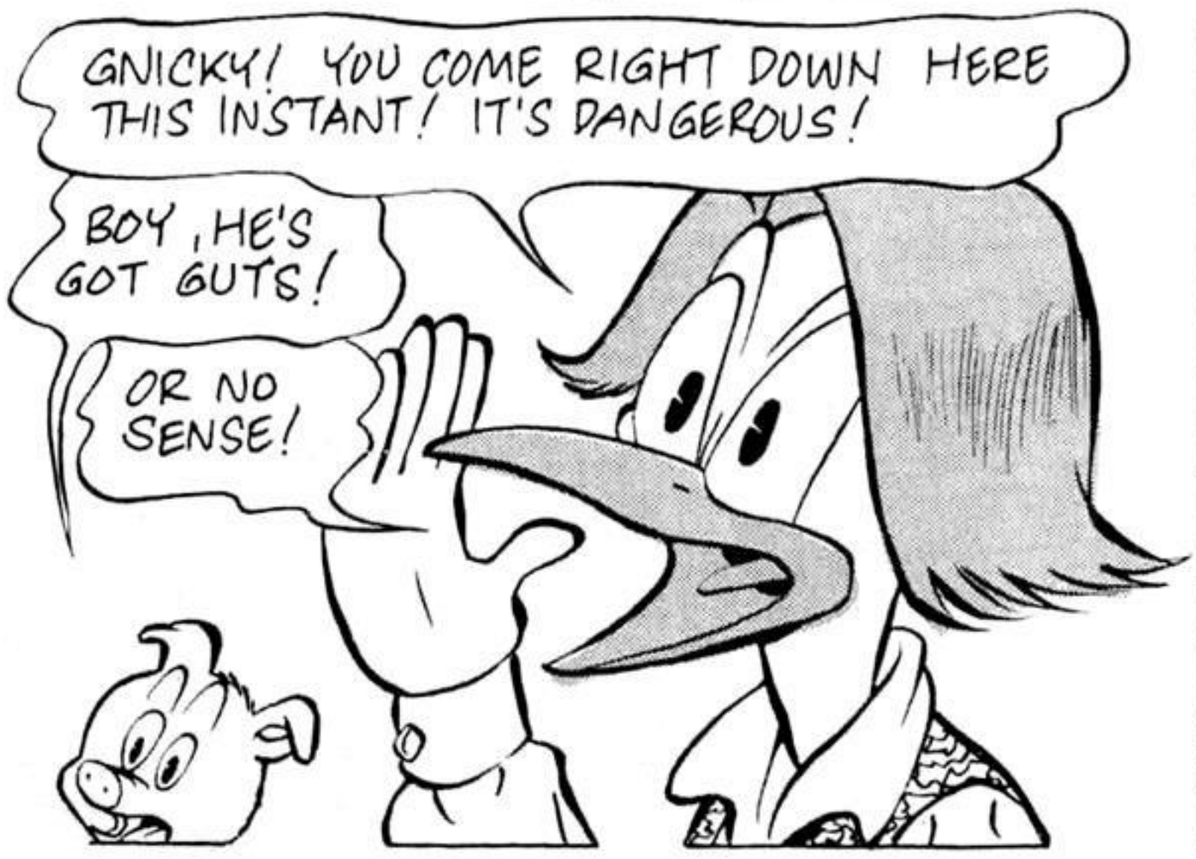
MAYBE I CAN GRAB ON TO AN ANTENNA OR A CHIMNEY...?

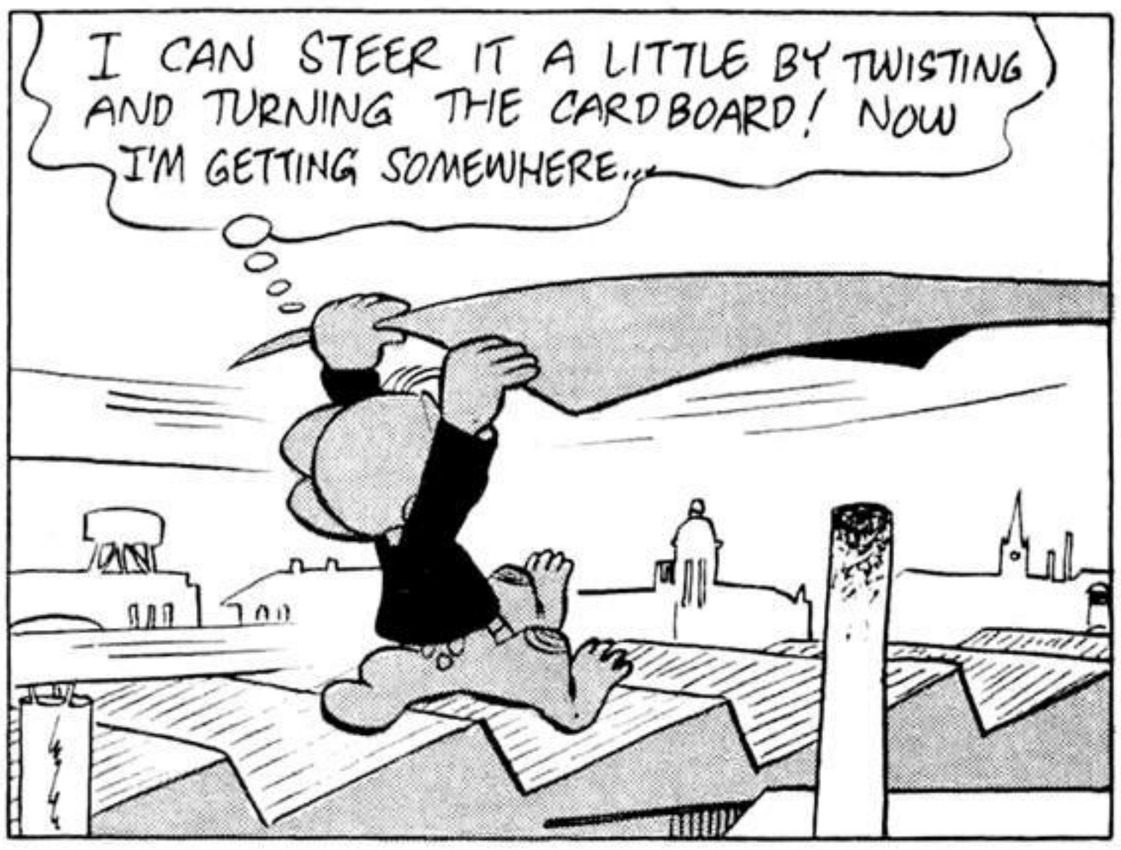
AT CITY HALL...
YOU'LL HAVE TO BE QUIET WHEN WE GO INSIDE THE EXHIBITION!
YES, MISS DE LITE!

IS EVERYBODY HERE?
WE'RE MISSING GNICKY!
THERE HE IS!

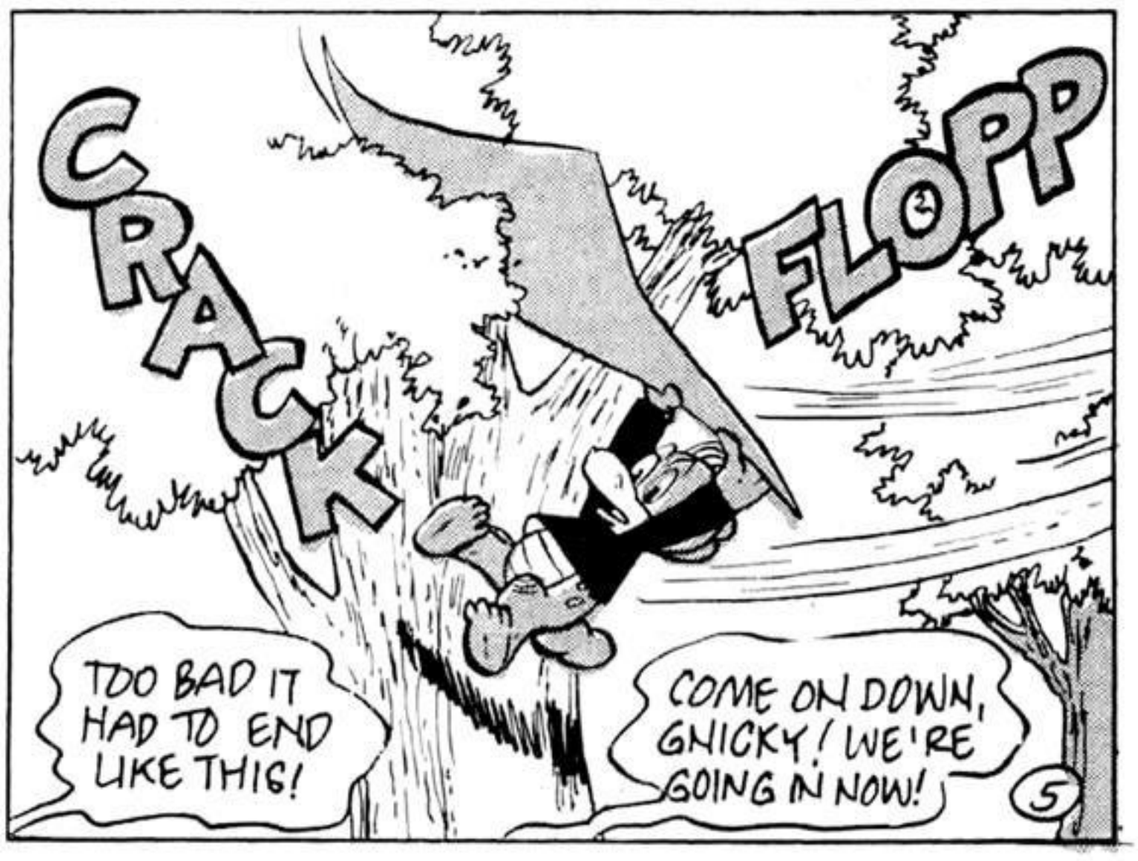
WHERE?
UP THERE!
WHERE?
IN THE AIR!
OH, WOW!

GOOD HEAVENS! WHAT'S HE DOING WAY UP THERE?
HAVING FUN?

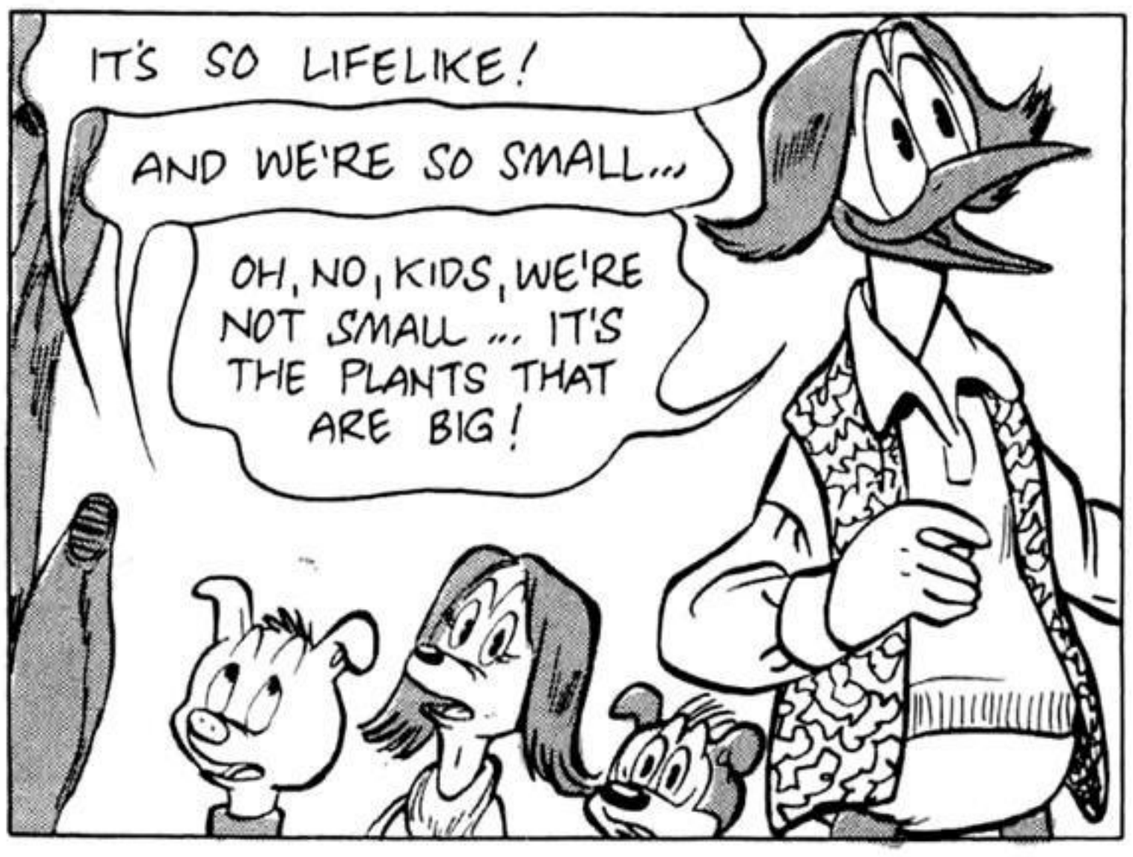

GNICKY! YOU COME RIGHT DOWN HERE THIS INSTANT! IT'S DANGEROUS!
BOY, HE'S GOT GUTS!
OR NO SENSE!

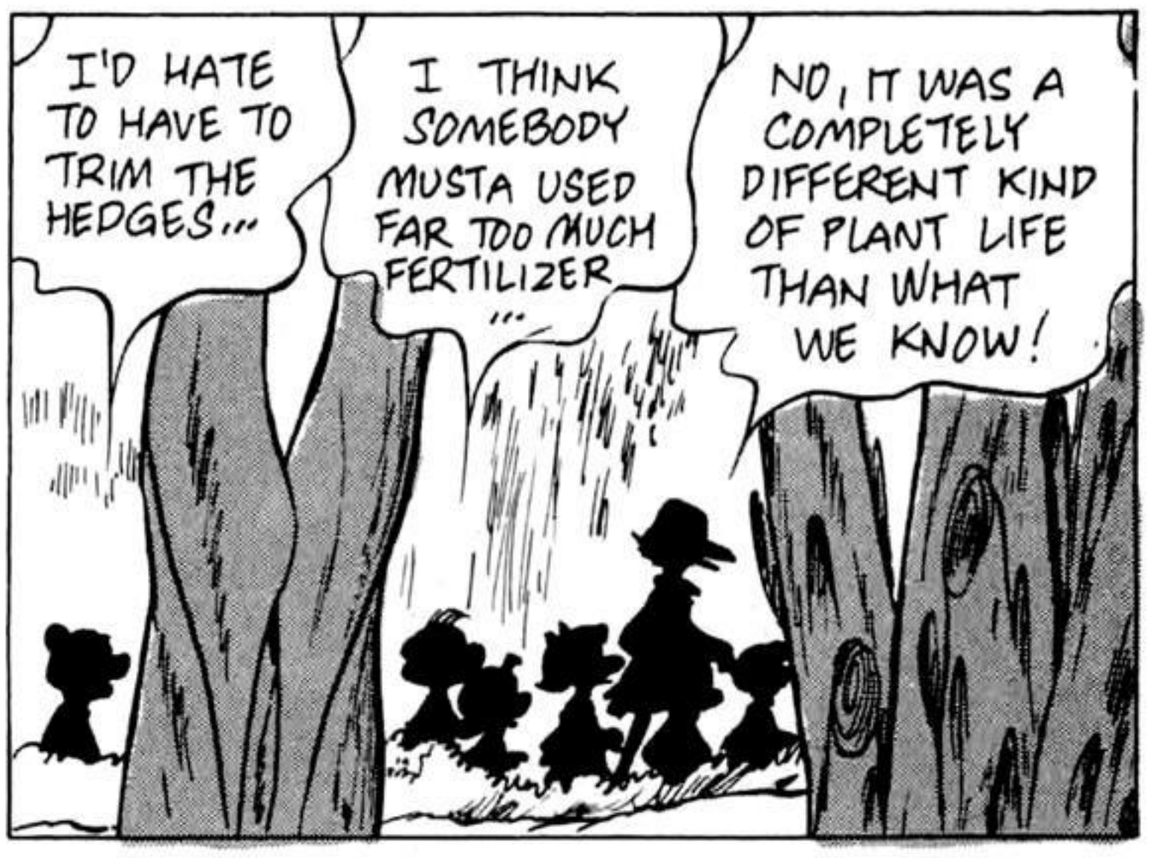

I CAN STEER IT A LITTLE BY TWISTING AND TURNING THE CARDBOARD! NOW I'M GETTING SOMEWHERE...

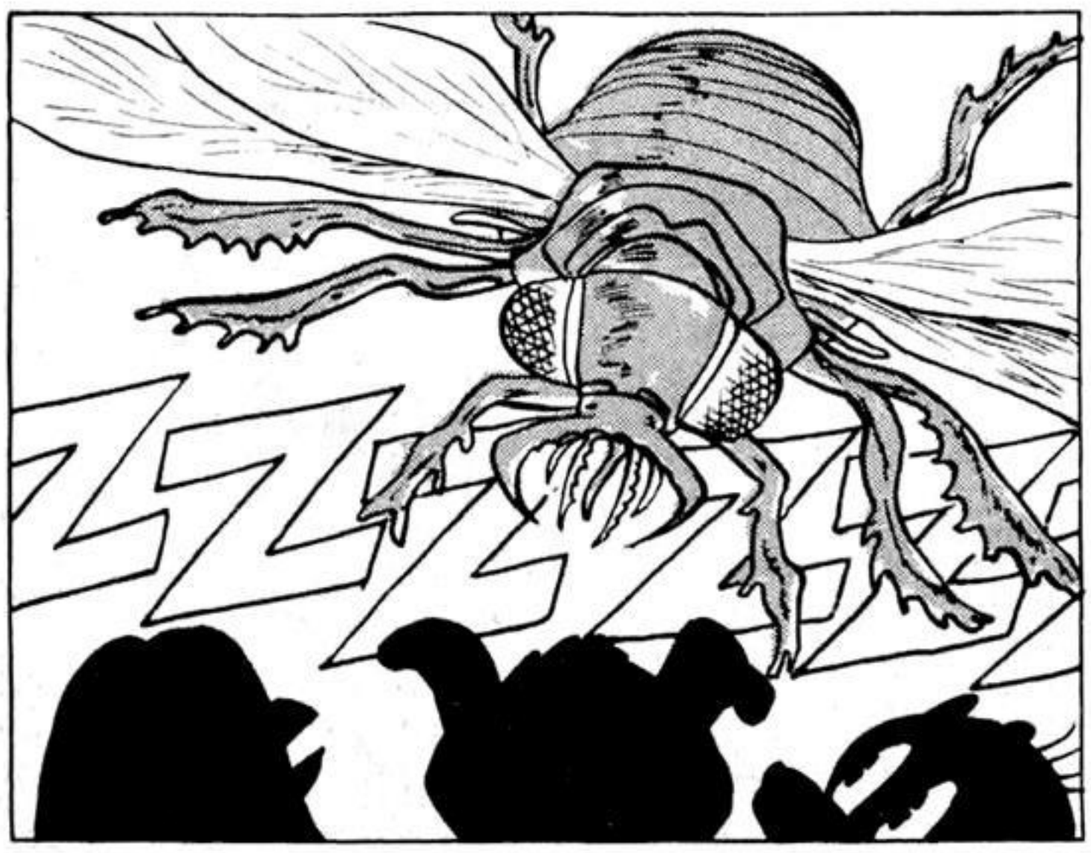
UHOH! THE TREES ON CITY HALL AVENUE ARE IN MY WAY!


CRACK
FLOPP
TOO BAD IT HAD TO END LIKE THIS!
COME ON DOWN, GNICKY! WE'RE GOING IN NOW!

HERE'S WHERE WE'LL BEGIN OUR FIELD TRIP TO THE CARBONIFER, OUS, OR COAL, AGE 250 MILLION YEARS AGO!



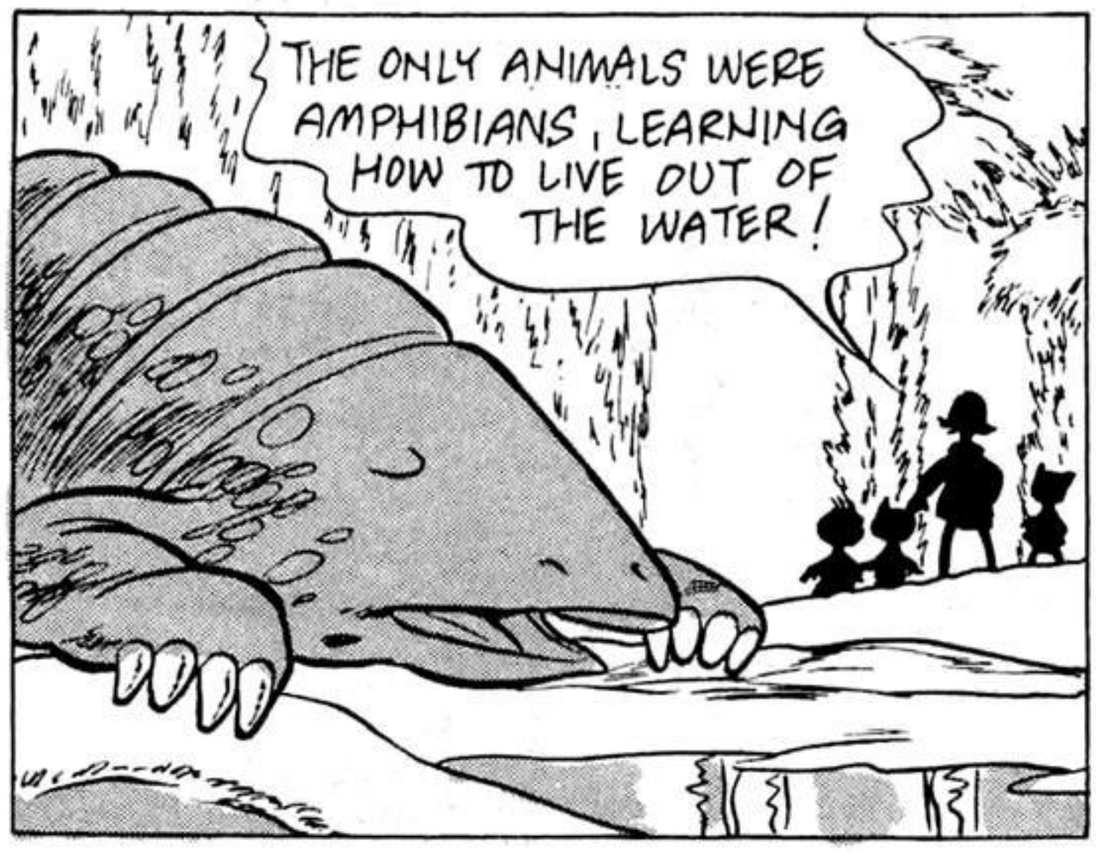


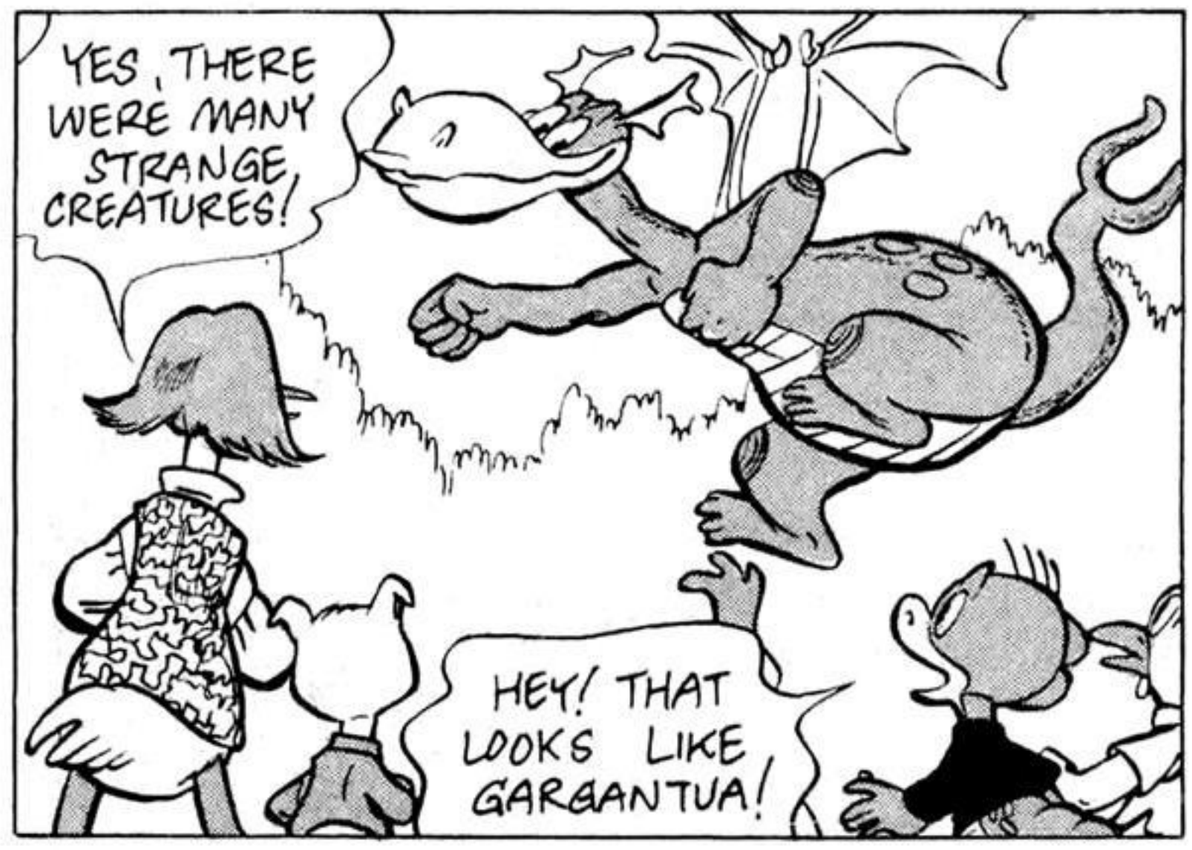

ZZZZZZ

INSECTS WERE ALSO QUITE LARGE BACK THEN!
THAT'S FOR SURE!

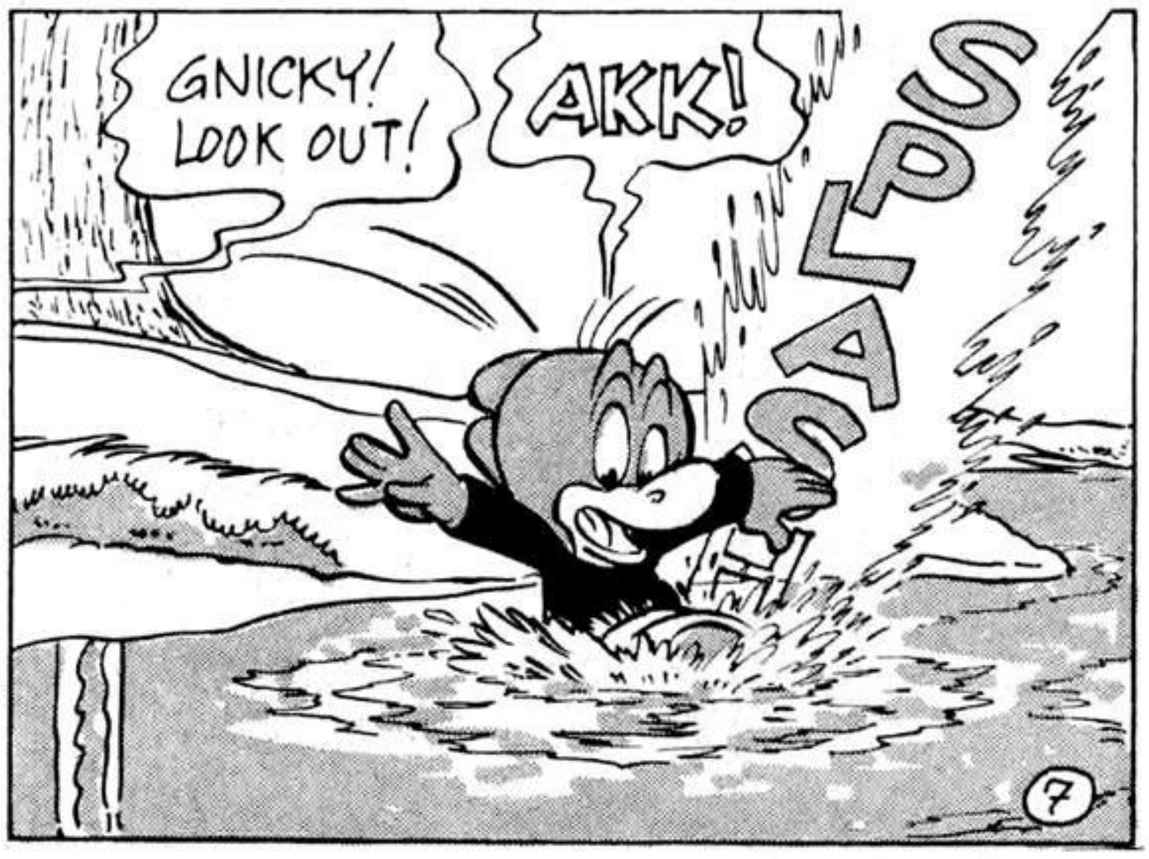
YOU CAN SEE HOW HOT AND HUMID IT IS HERE!
WHEW..!

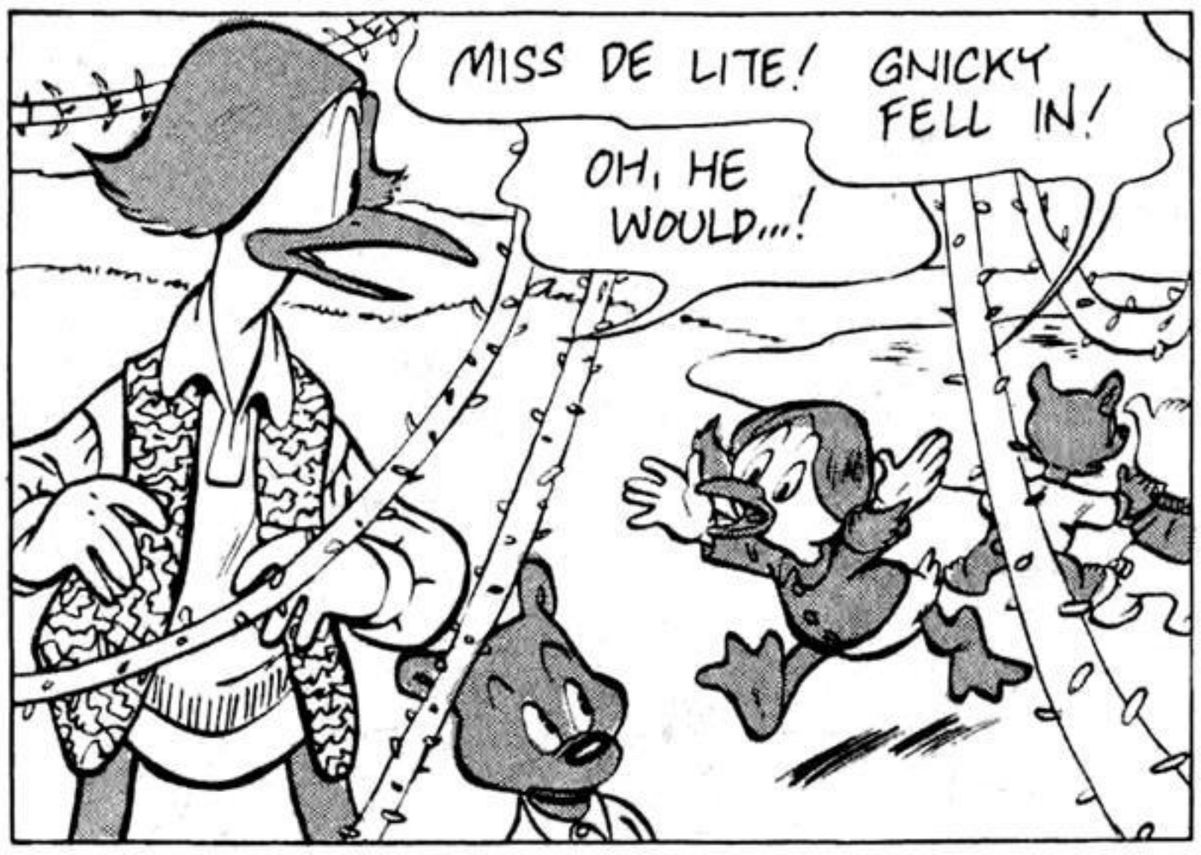
YEAH, AN' YOU CAN'T HELP GETTING YOUR FEET WET IN ALL THIS SWAMP AN' JUNGLE!
THIS IS SO GROSS!

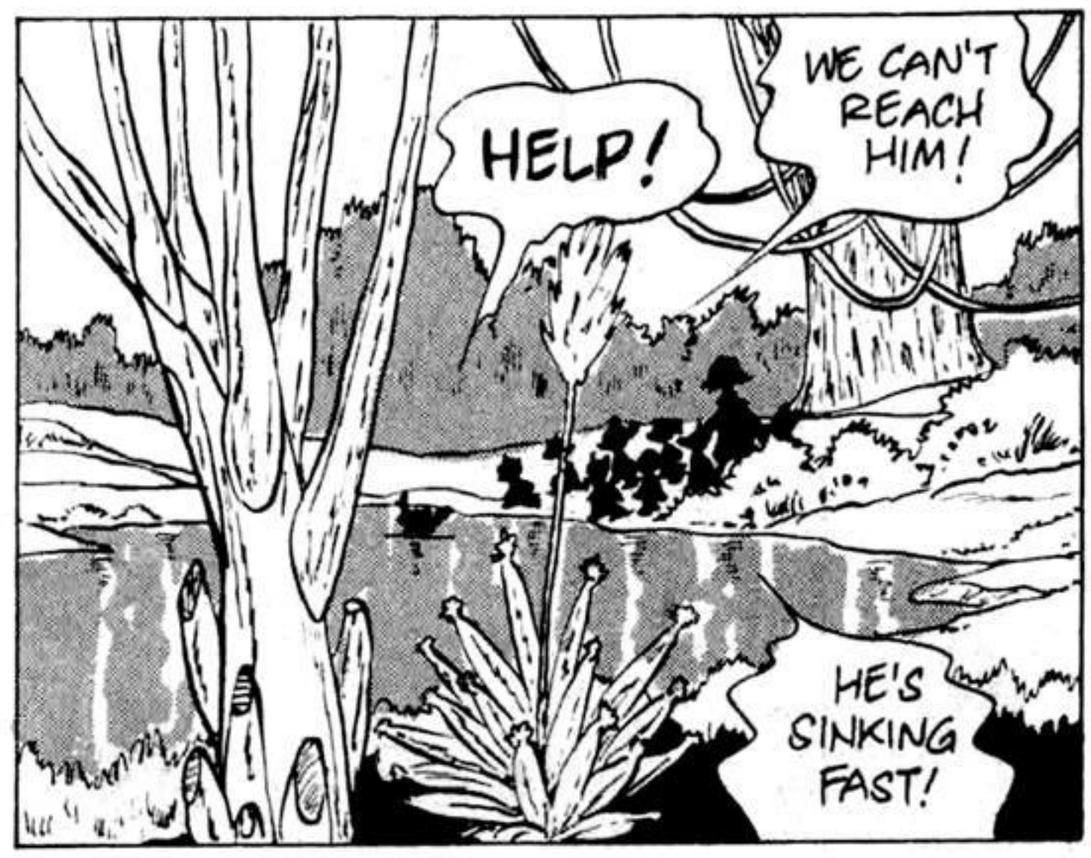

THE ONLY ANIMALS WERE AMPHIBIANS, LEARNING HOW TO LIVE OUT OF THE WATER!


YES, THERE WERE MANY STRANGE CREATURES!
HEY! THAT LOOKS LIKE GARGANTUA!

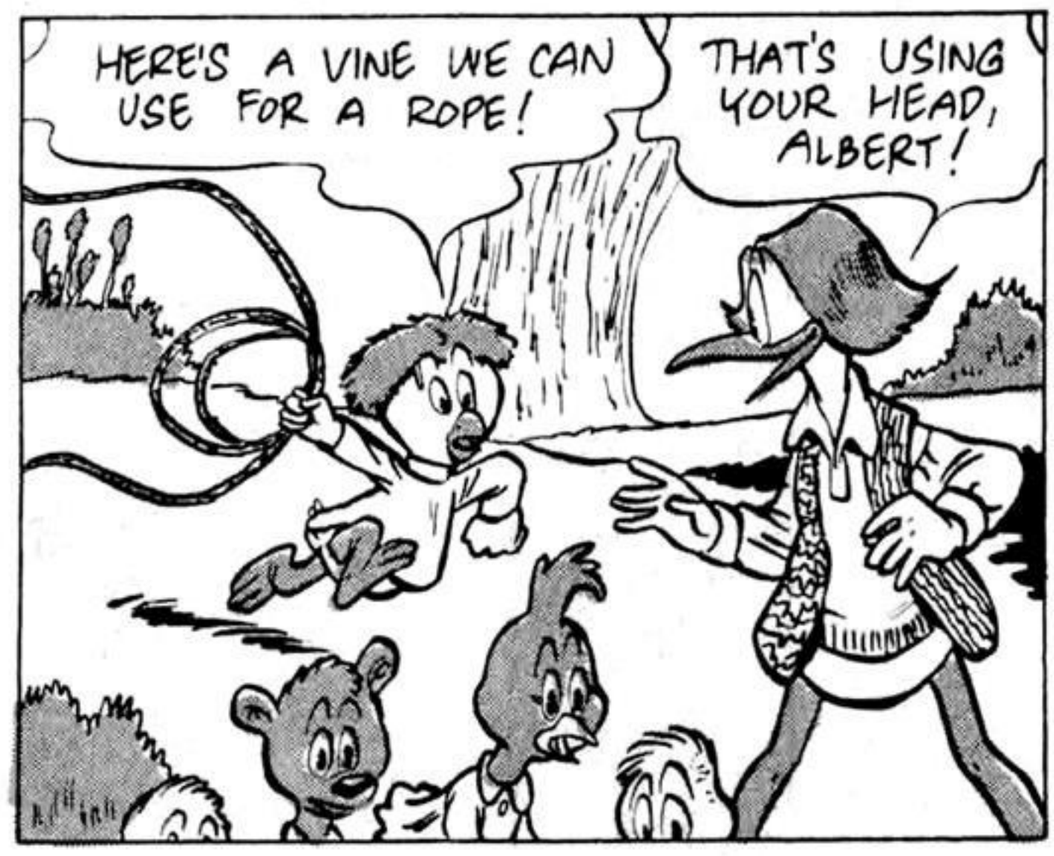
BUT PLANTS WERE THE MOST PLENTIFUL! THERE WERE SO MANY THAT WHEN THEY DIED, THEY BECAME ALL THE COAL WE BURN TODAY AS FUEL..
INCREDIBLE...

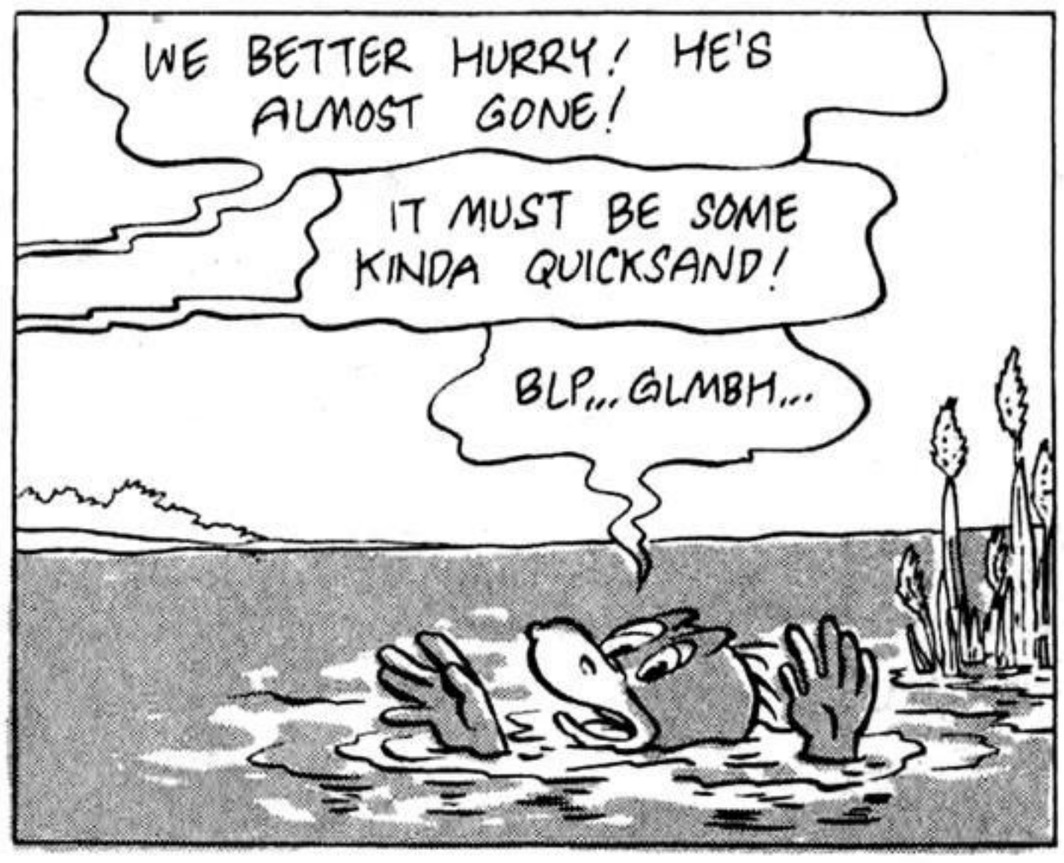

GNICKY! LOOK OUT!
AKK!
SPLASH

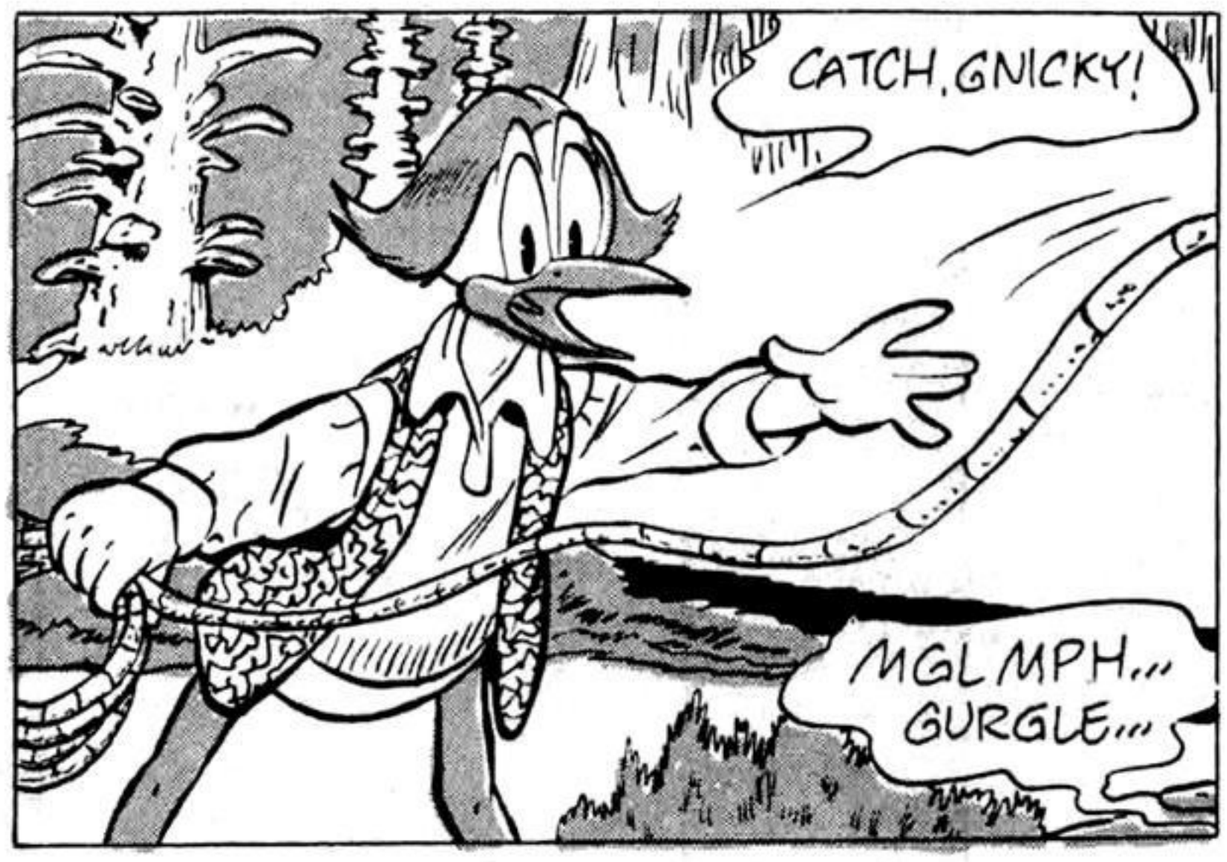

MISS DE LITE! GNICKY FELL IN!
OH, HE WOULD...!

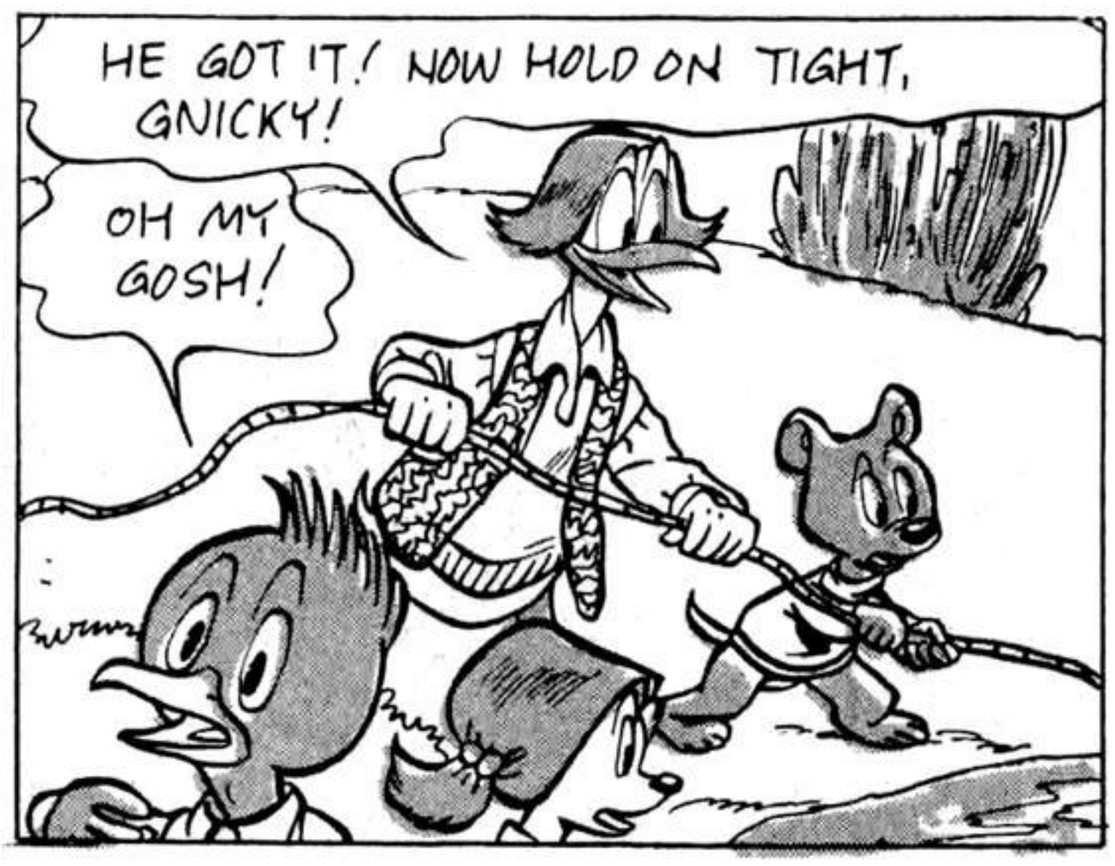

HELP!
WE CAN'T REACH HIM!
HE'S SINKING FAST!

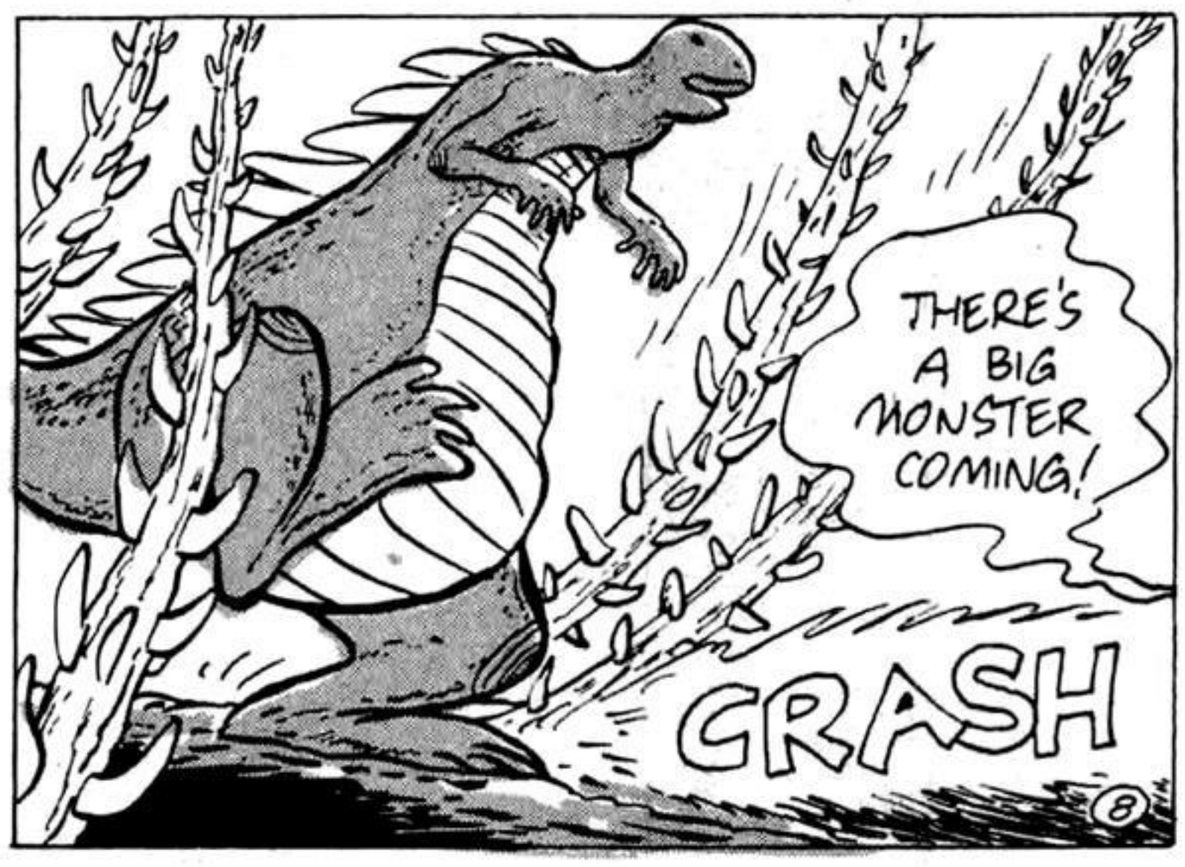
RIP
WHAT CAN WE DO?
WE GOTTA THINK OF SOMETHING BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!


HERE'S A VINE WE CAN USE FOR A ROPE!
THAT'S USING YOUR HEAD, ALBERT!

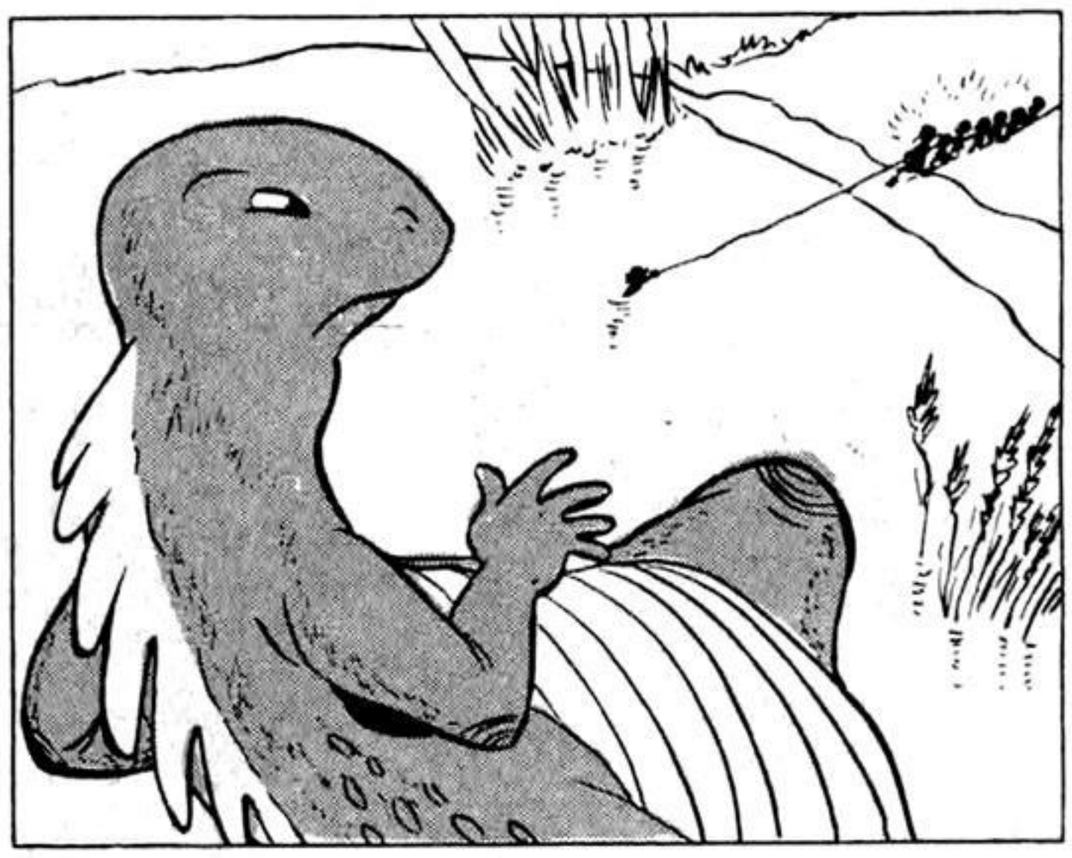

WE BETTER HURRY! HE'S ALMOST GONE!
IT MUST BE SOME KINDA QUICKSAND!
BLP... GLMBH...

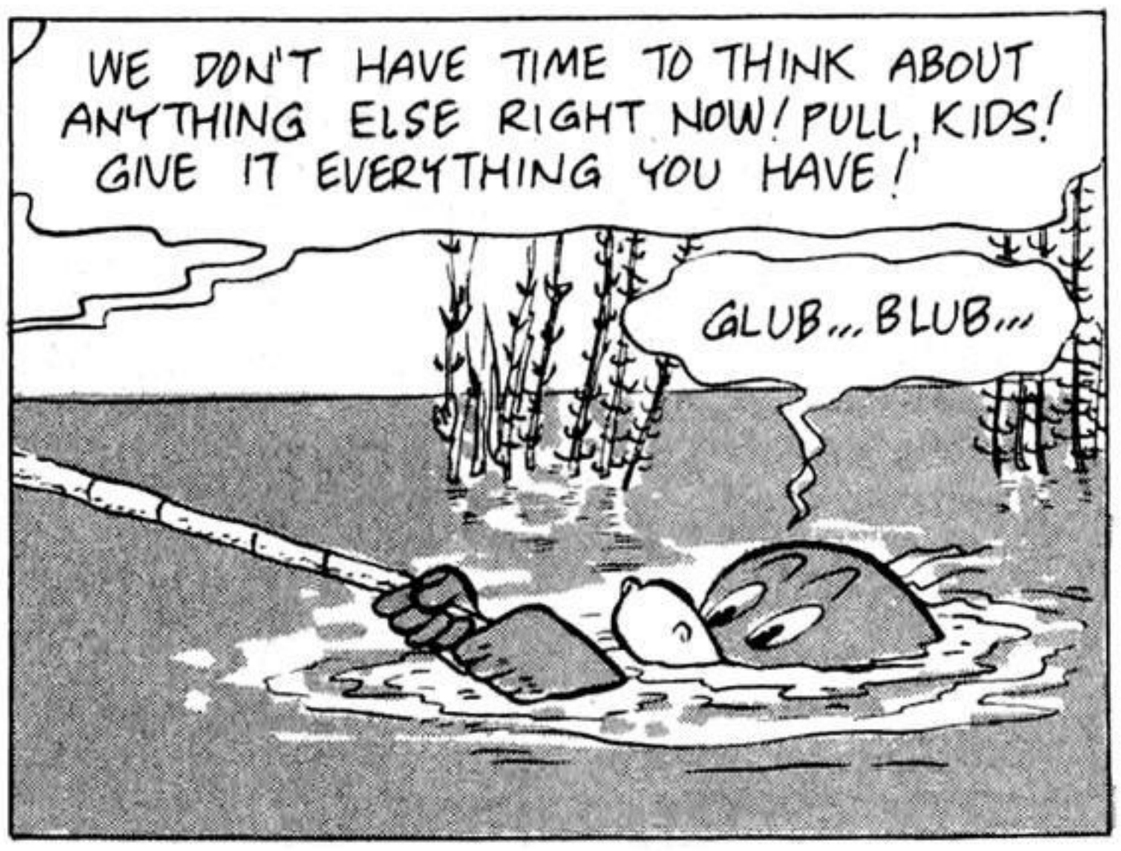

CATCH, GNICKY!
MGLMPH... GURGLE...

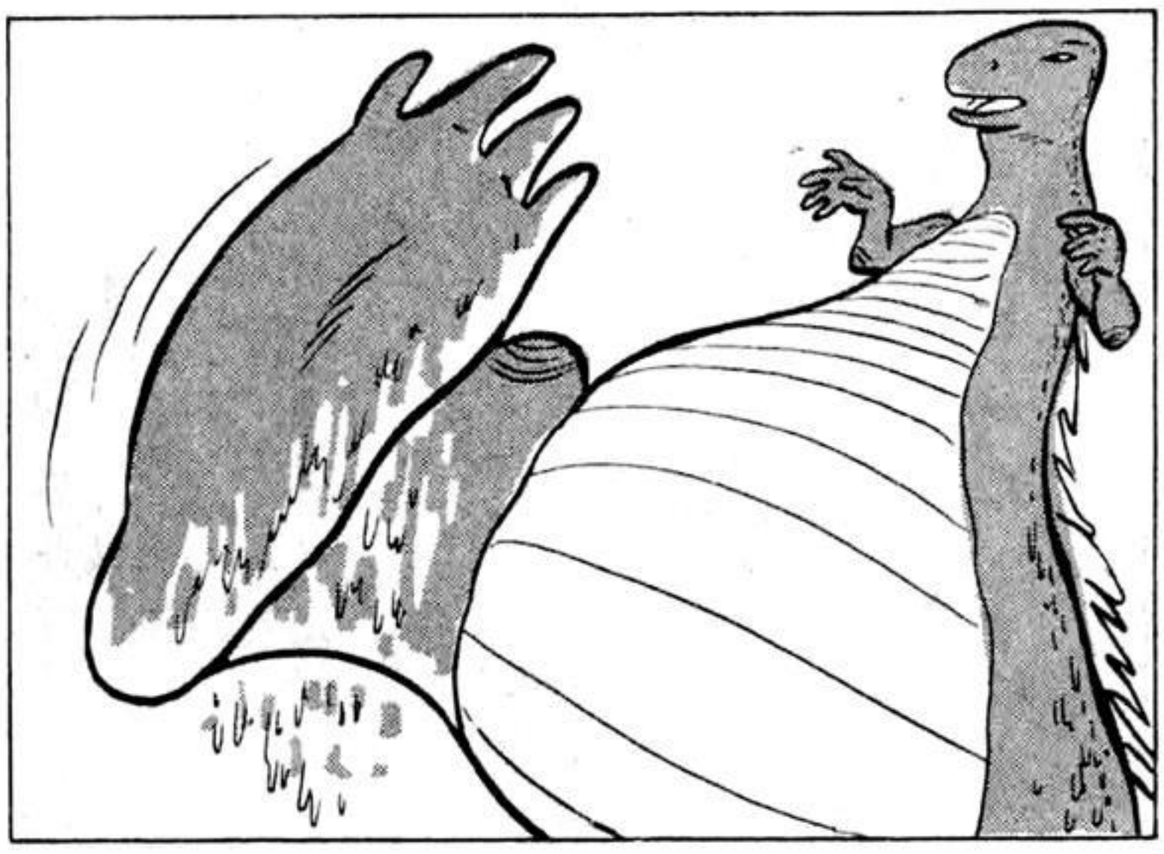

HE GOT IT! NOW HOLD ON TIGHT, GNICKY!
OH MY GOSH!

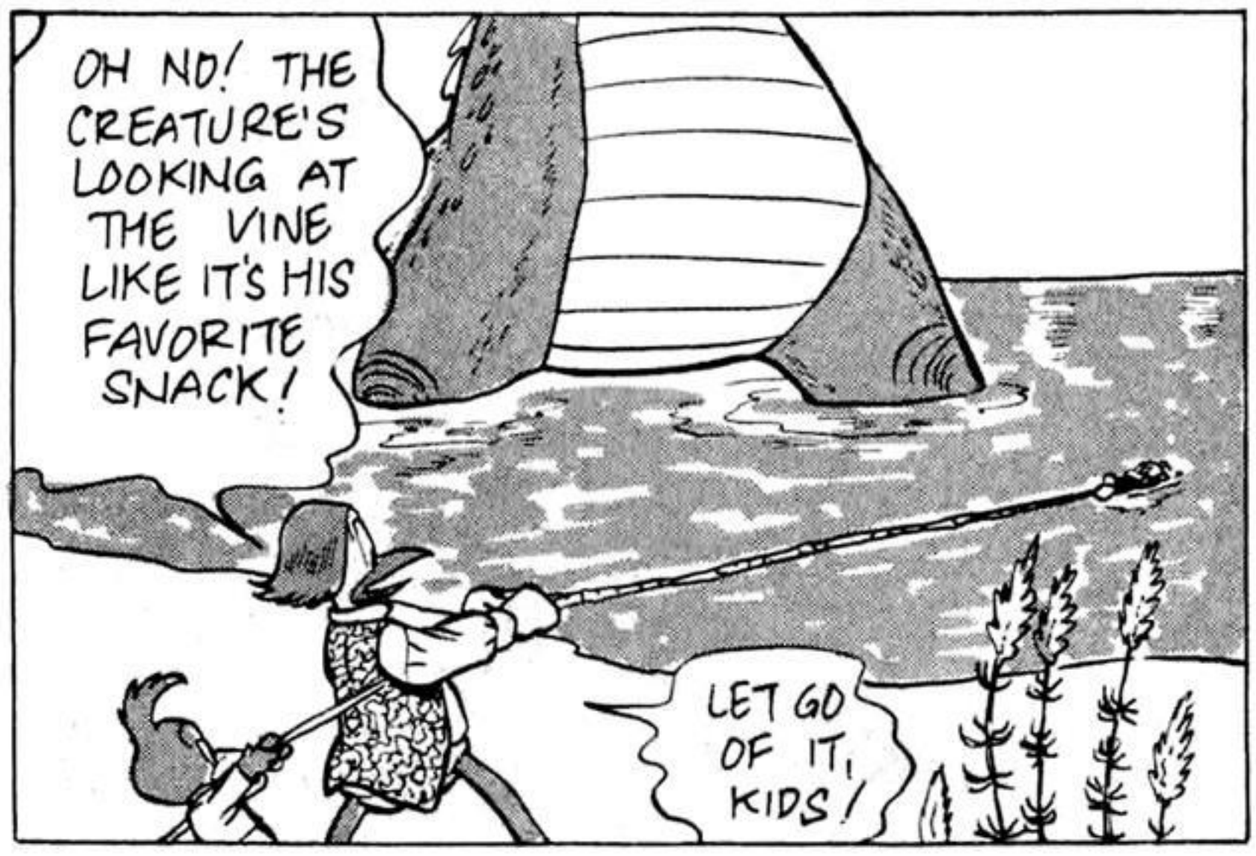

THERE'S A BIG MONSTER COMING!
CRASH

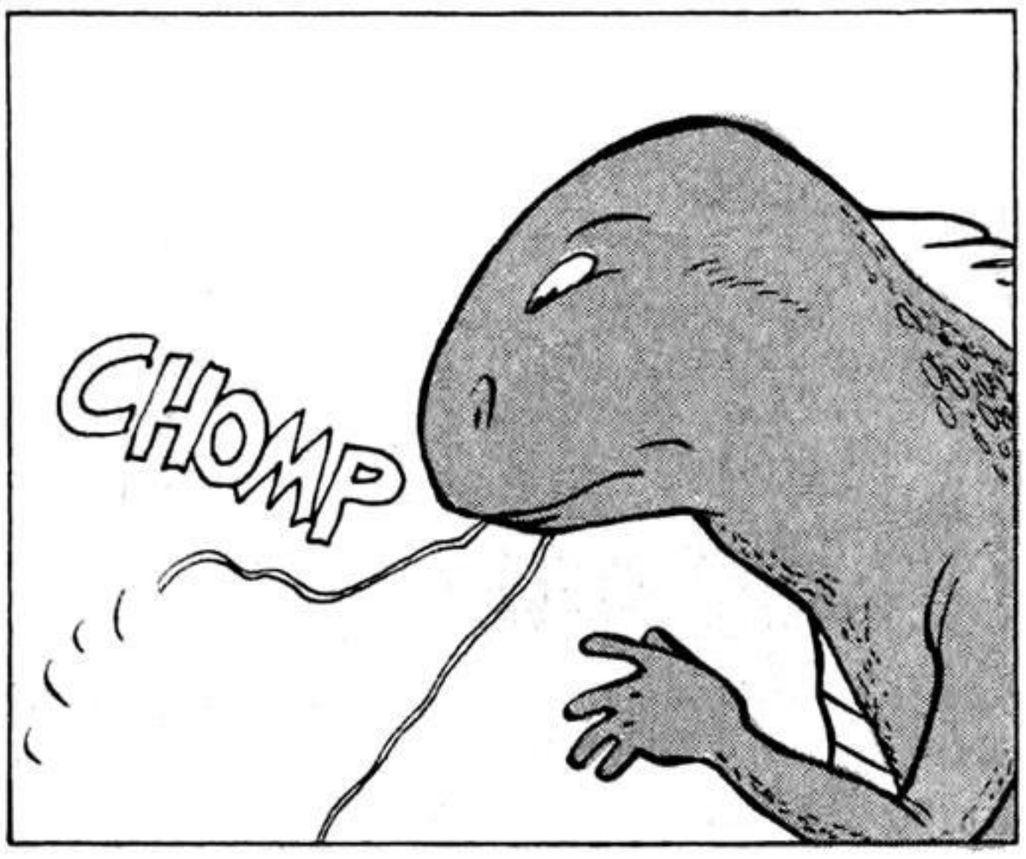
STAY CALM, KIDS! THAT SPECIES ONLY ATE PLANTS! DON'T LET IT WORRY YOU!
YEAH, BUT IT COULD STEP ON US!
UNGH!

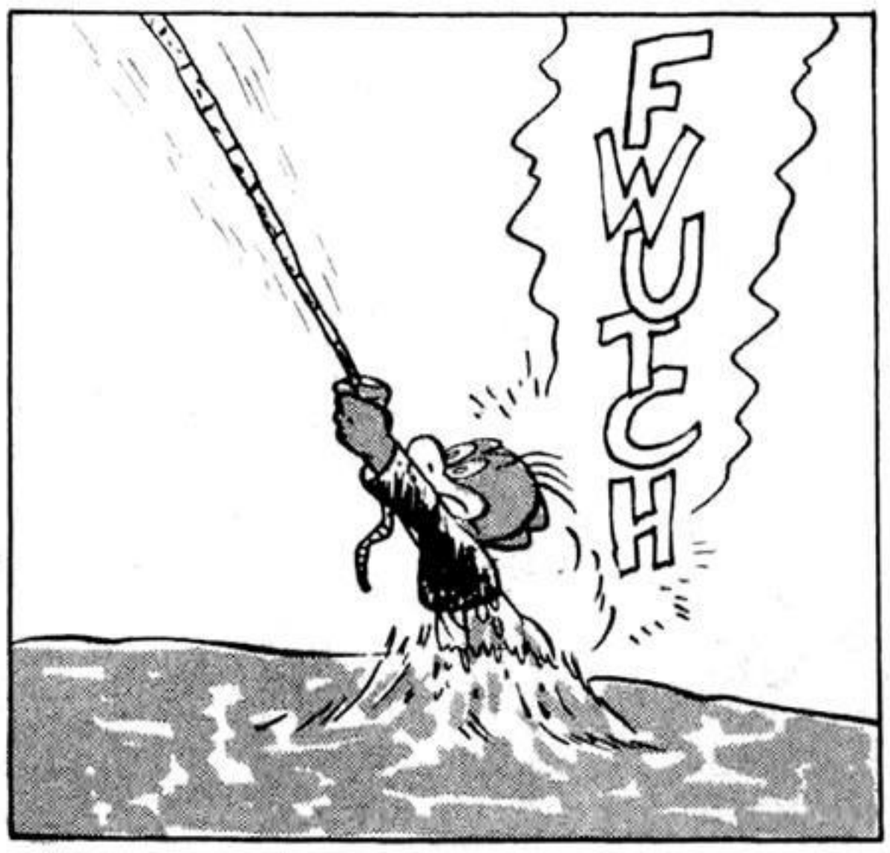



WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE RIGHT NOW! PULL, KIDS! GIVE IT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE!
GLUB... BLUB...



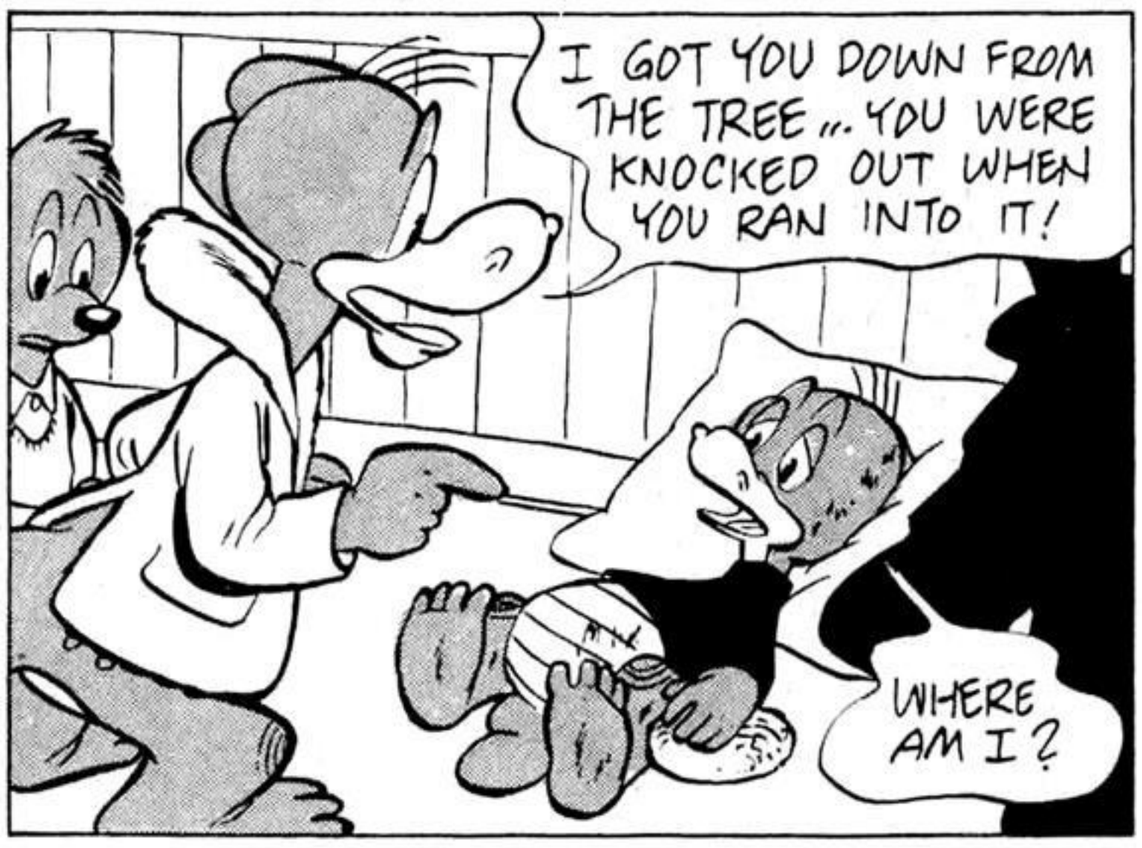

OH NO! THE CREATURE'S LOOKING AT THE VINE LIKE IT'S HIS FAVORITE SNACK!
LET GO OF IT, KIDS!


CHOMP


FWUTCH

GNICKY! WAKE UP!
UHH... HUH?

OH, THANK GOODNESS! HE'S COMING TO!
WHA'... HAPPENED TO ME?

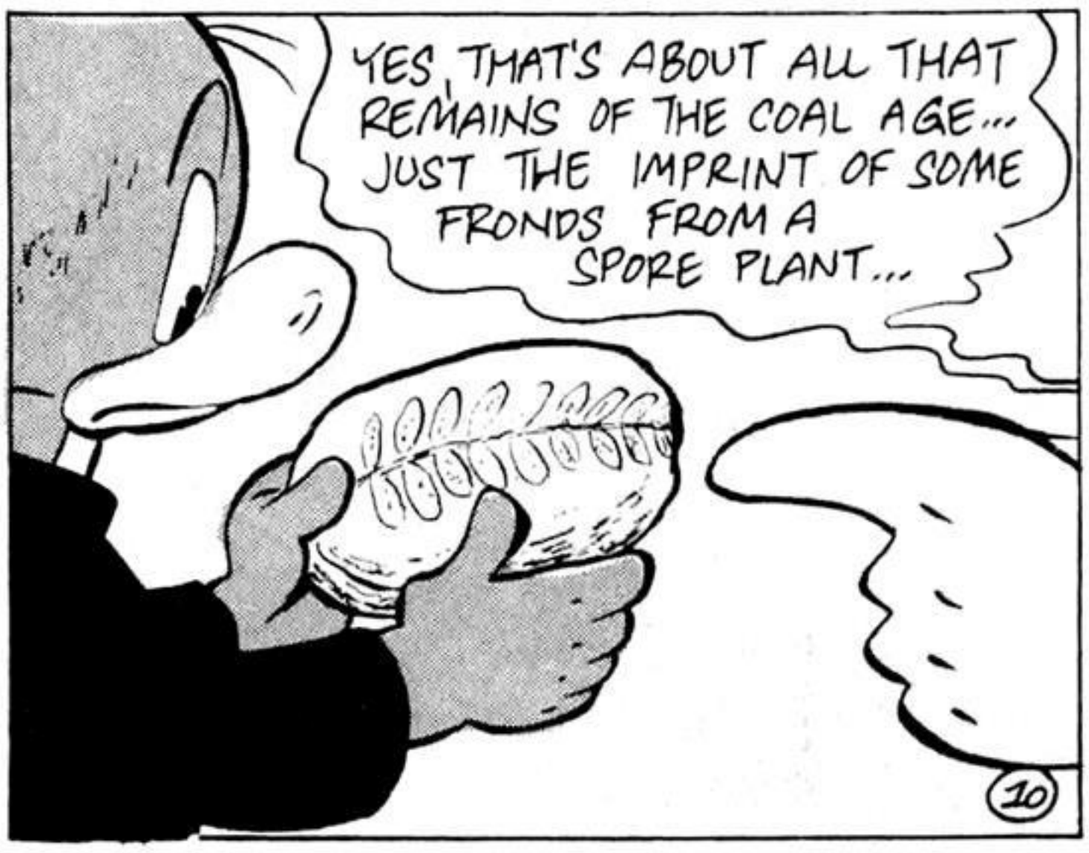

I GOT YOU DOWN FROM THE TREE... YOU WERE KNOCKED OUT WHEN YOU RAN INTO IT!
WHERE AM I?

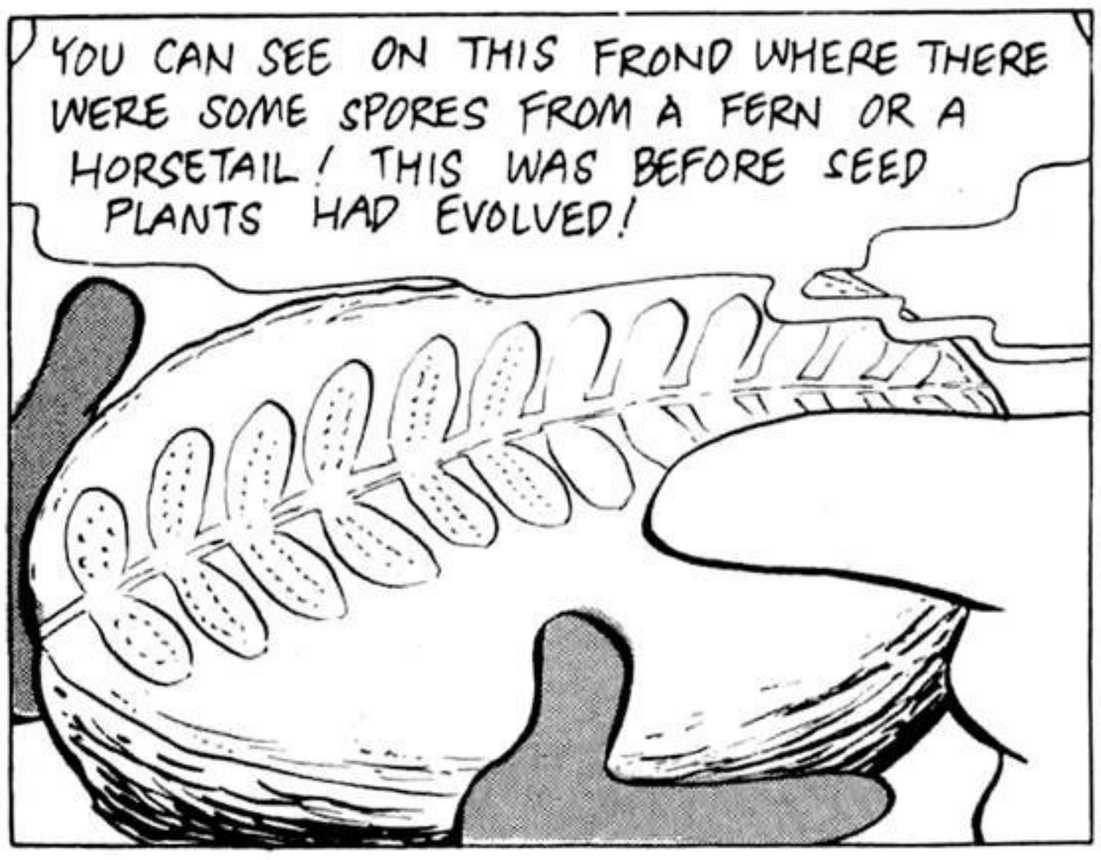
WE BROUGHT YOU INSIDE CITY HALL, GNICKY! YOU KNOW, WHERE WE WERE GOING TO SEE THE COAL AGE EXHIBITION!
COAL AGE..?
YES, AS AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR PLANT SHOW AT SCHOOL!

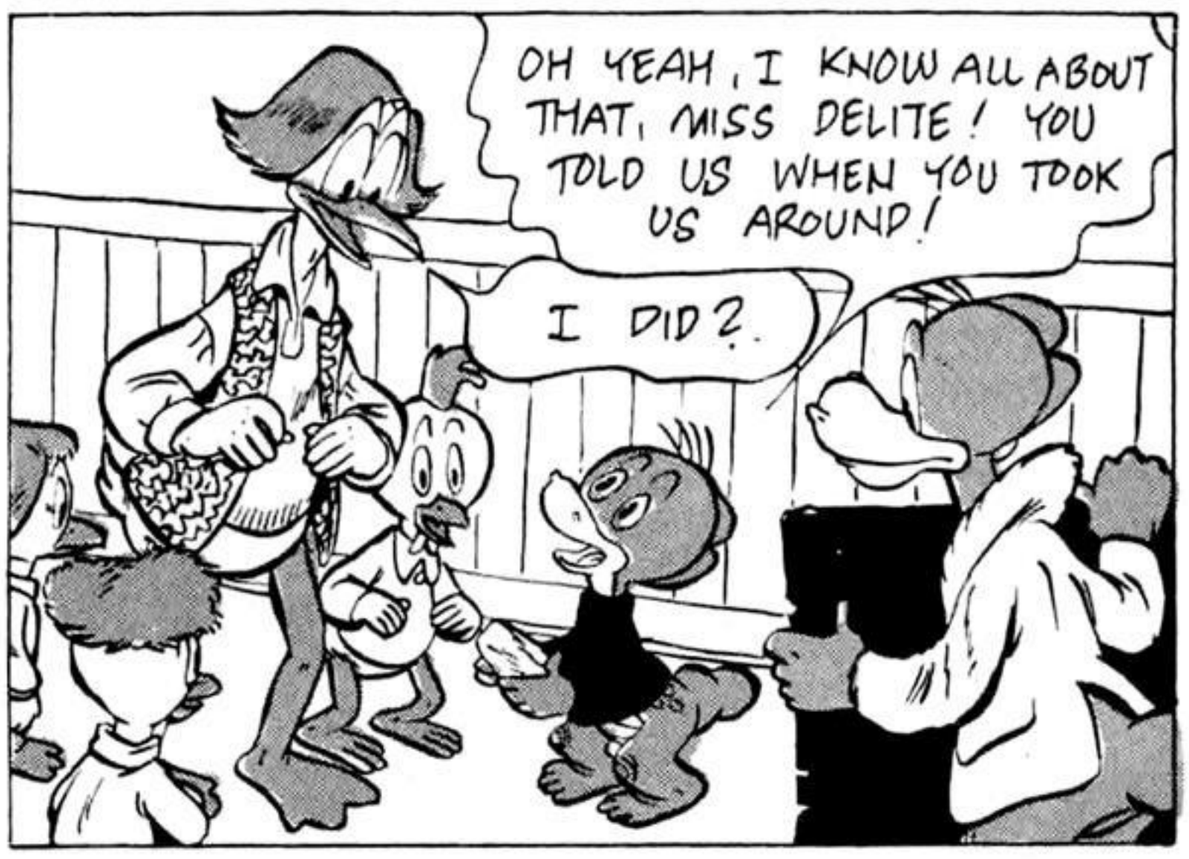
OH... NOW I REMEMBER! ...MY SIGN! DID IT GET MESSED UP?
YOU'RE OVER THE WORST OF IT IF THAT'S ALL YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT, GNICKY!

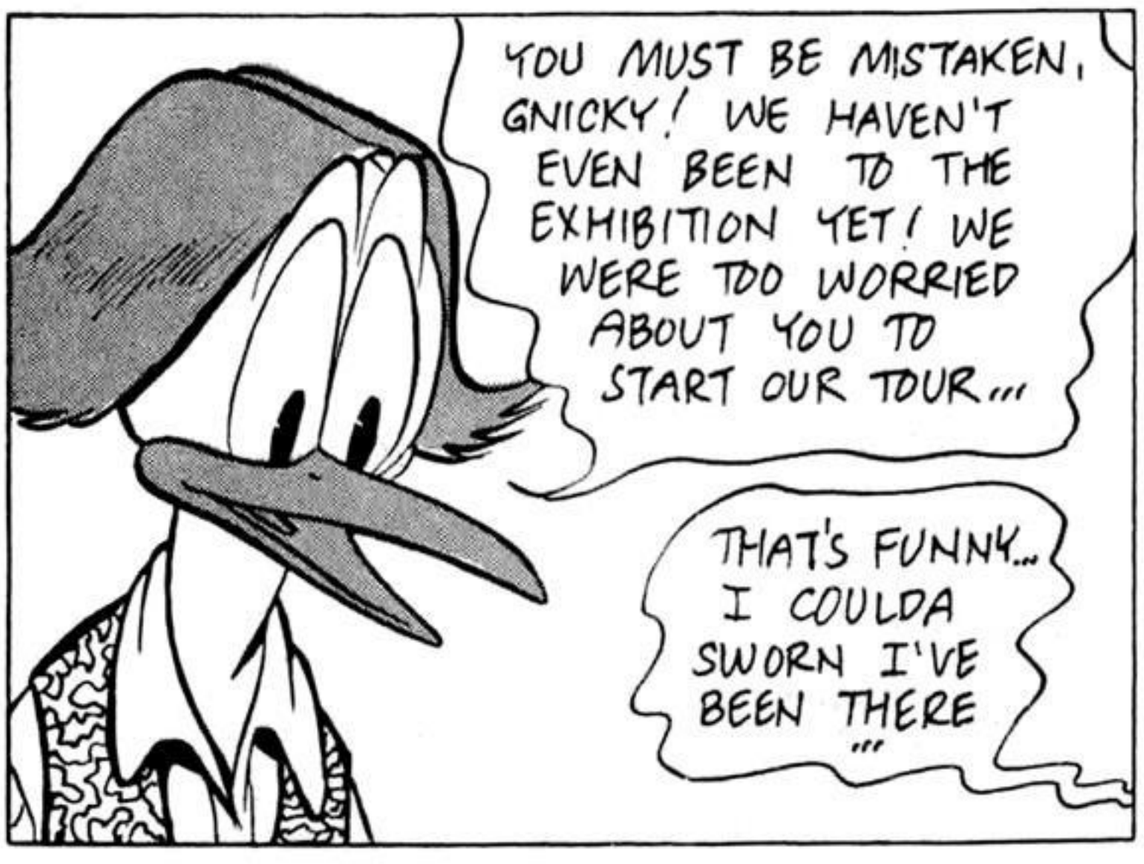
HERE'S YOUR SIGN! IT JUST GOT A LITTLE BENT AND SCUFFED UP HERE AND THERE...
See the Green
VISIT OUR PLANT SHOW

WHAT'S THIS THING I'M HOLDING?
IT LOOKS LIKE A FOSSIL, GNICKY!


YES, THAT'S ABOUT ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE COAL AGE... JUST THE IMPRINT OF SOME FRONDS FROM A SPORE PLANT...


YOU CAN SEE ON THIS FROND WHERE THERE WERE SOME SPORES FROM A FERN OR A HORSETAIL! THIS WAS BEFORE SEED PLANTS HAD EVOLVED!


OH YEAH, I KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT, MISS DELITE! YOU TOLD US WHEN YOU TOOK US AROUND!
I DID?


YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN, GNICKY! WE HAVEN'T EVEN BEEN TO THE EXHIBITION YET! WE WERE TOO WORRIED ABOUT YOU TO START OUR TOUR...
THAT'S FUNNY... I COULDA SWORN I'VE BEEN THERE...

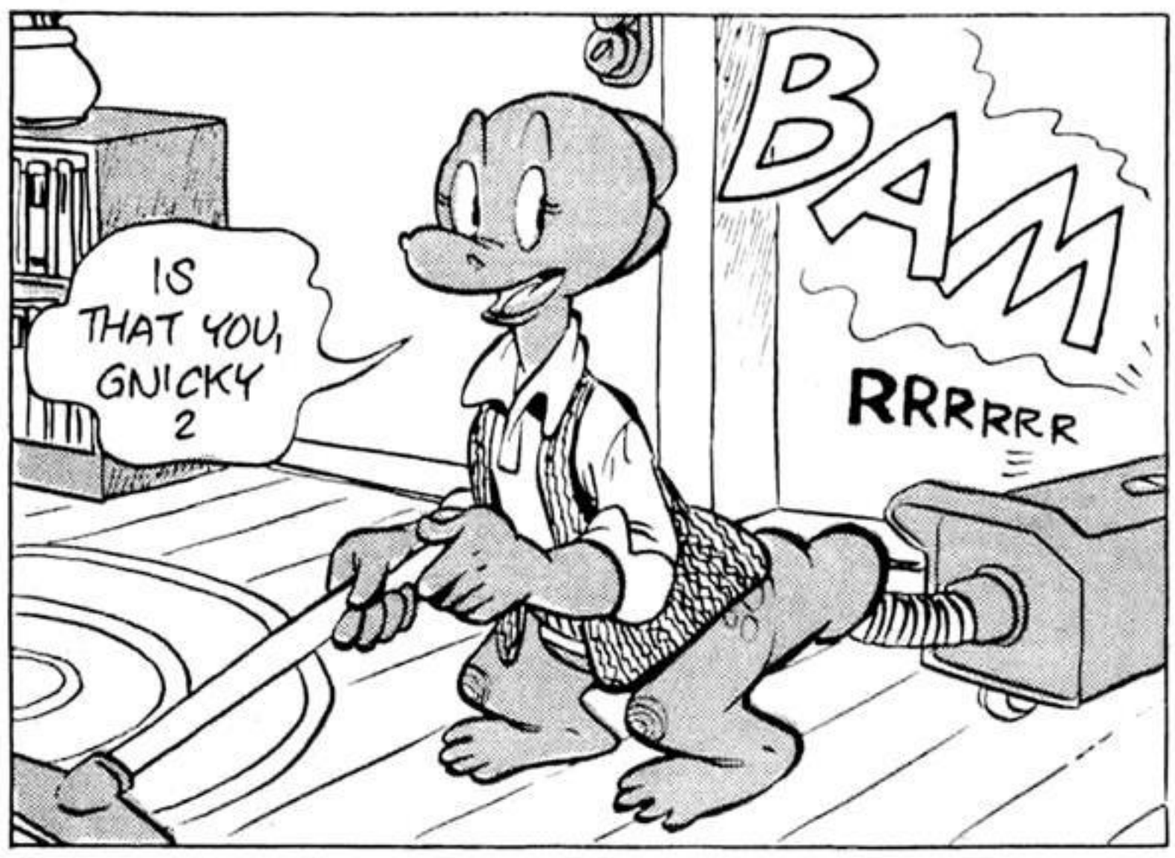
BUT COME ALONG NOW, KIDS! WE'VE ALL BEEN INVITED ON A FIELD TRIP BACK TO THE COAL AGE! ISN'T IT EXITING?!!
YEAH!

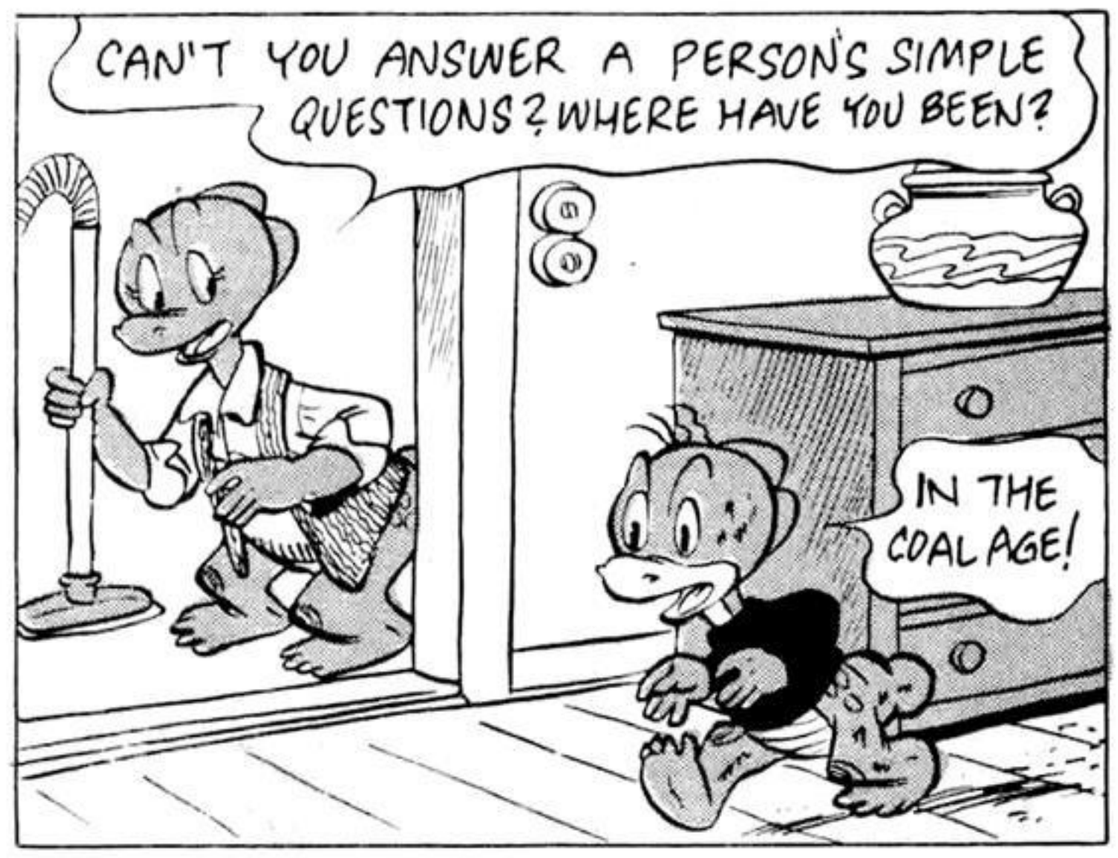
NOO!!

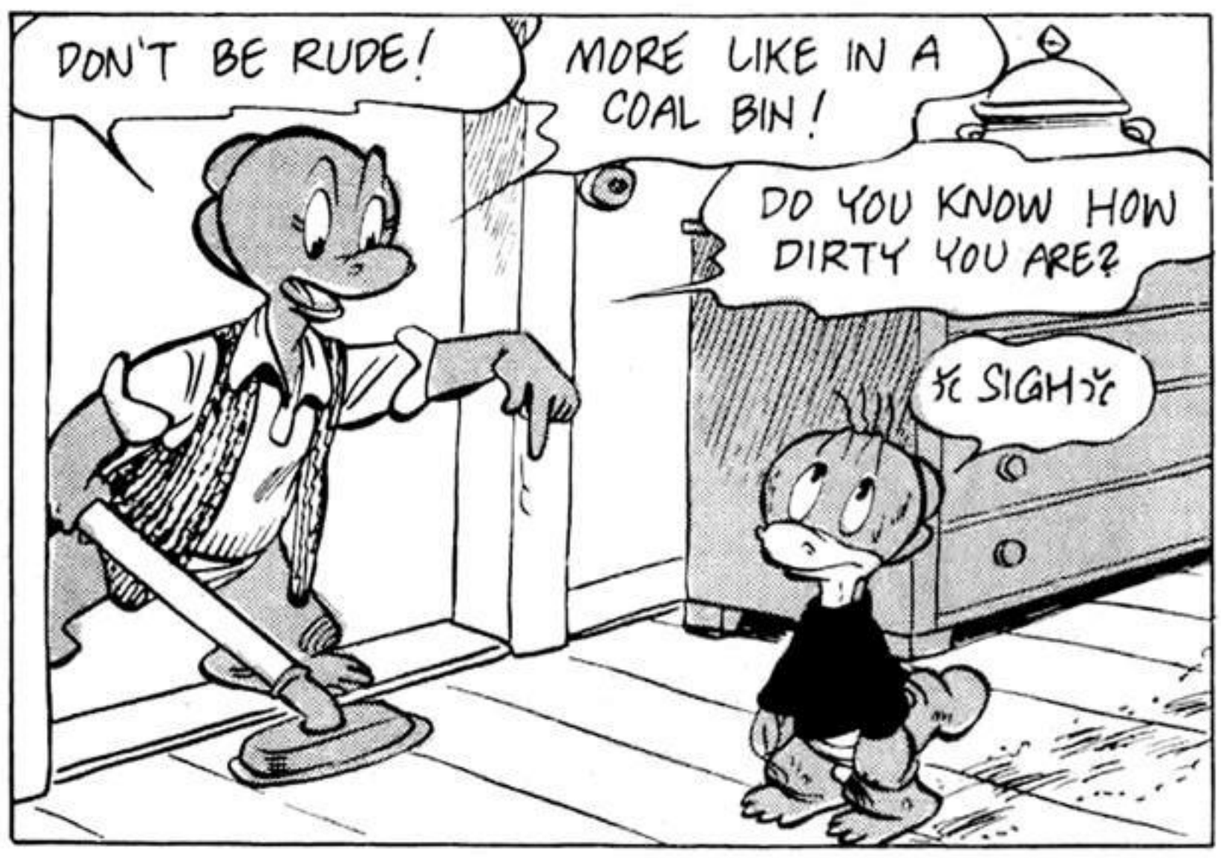
WHAT'S WRONG, GNICKY?
THAT'S DANGEROUS!

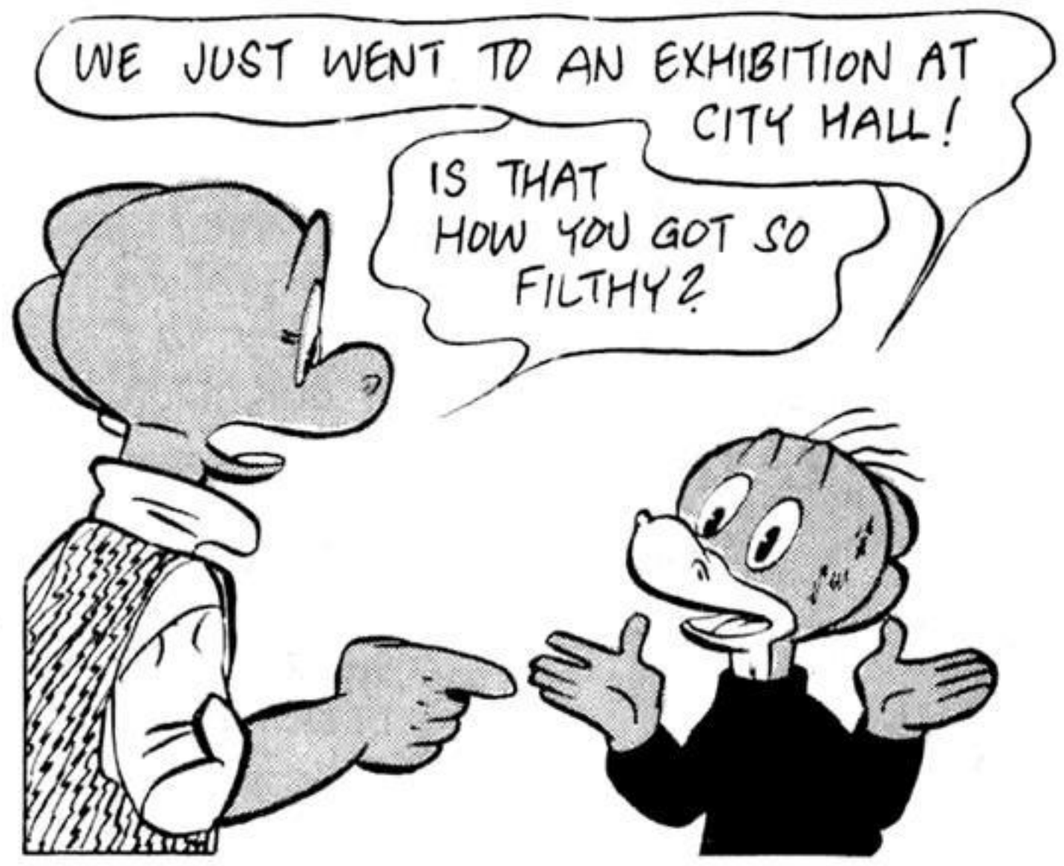
LET ME OUTTA HERE!!!
WHAT'S COME OVER HIM?

THE MUSEUM HAS ARRANGED A VERY REALISTIC EXHIBITION! IT'S ALMOST LIKE ACTUALLY BEING BACK IN THE COAL AGE, SO TO SPEAK...

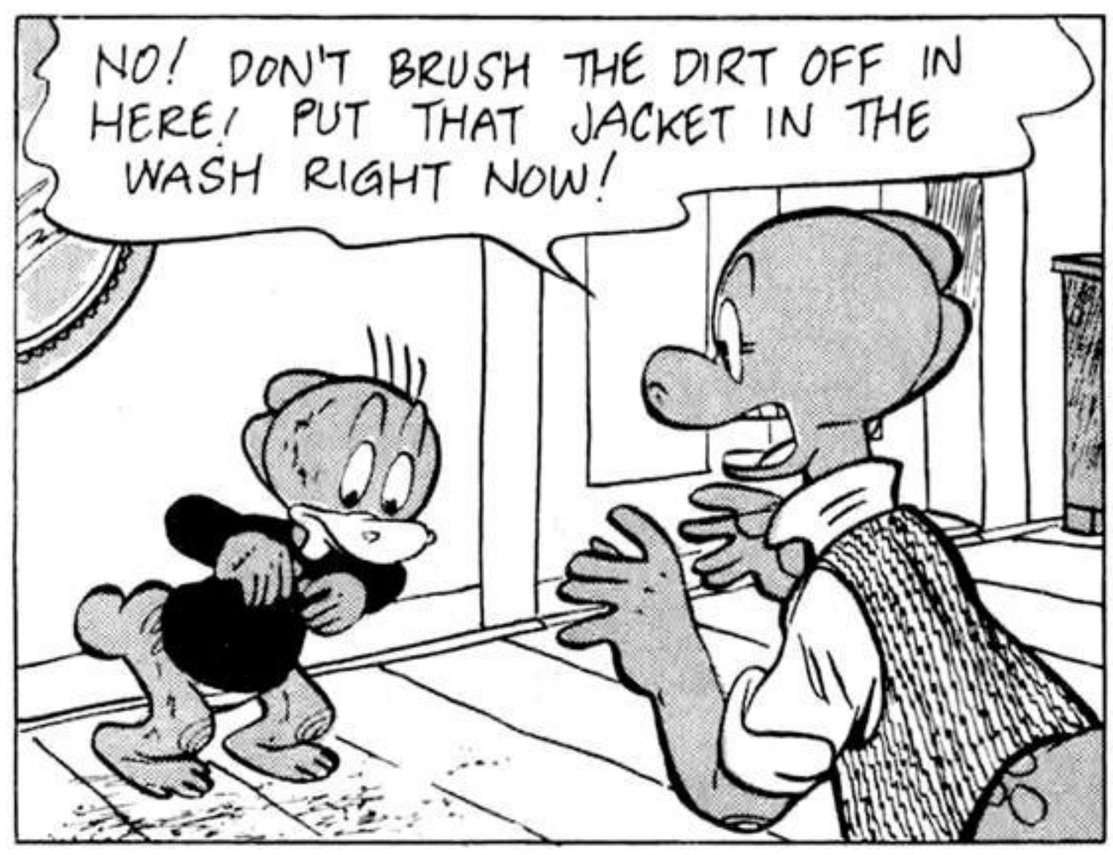

IS THAT YOU, GNICKY 2
BAM
RRRRRR


CAN'T YOU ANSWER A PERSON'S SIMPLE QUESTIONS? WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
IN THE COAL AGE!

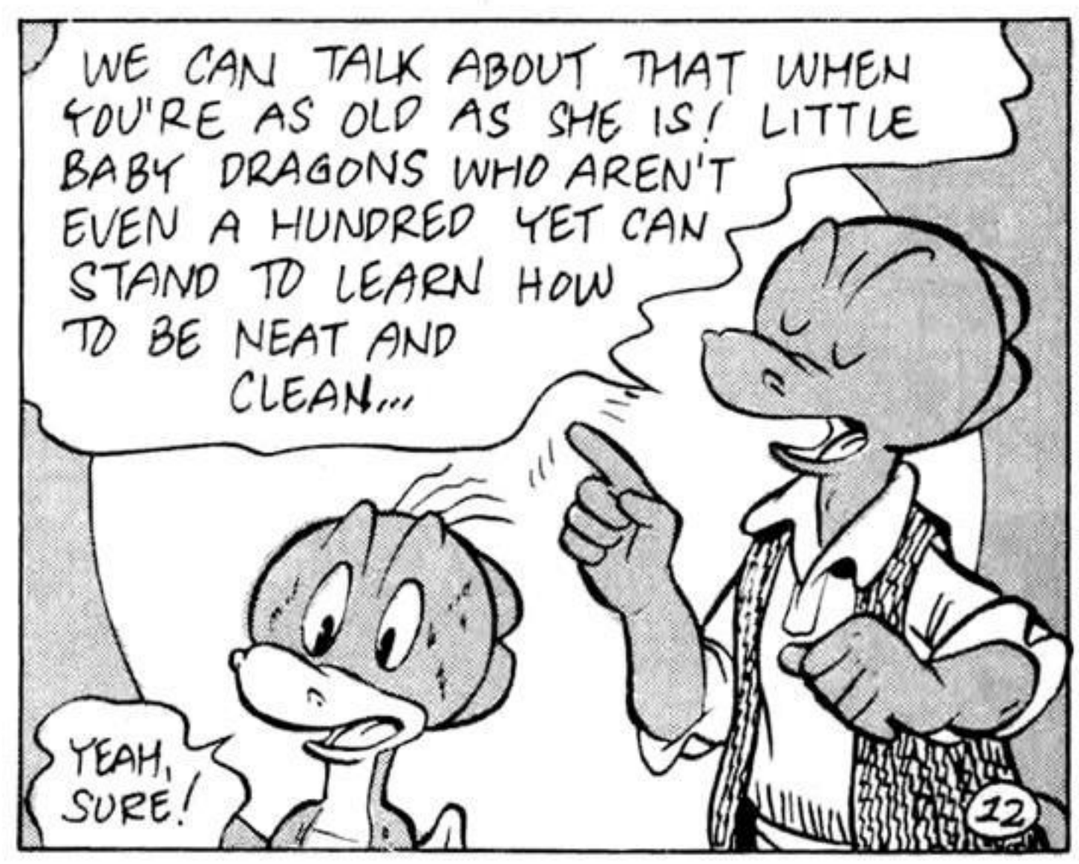

DON'T BE RUDE!
MORE LIKE IN A COAL BIN!
DO YOU KNOW HOW DIRTY YOU ARE?
SIGH


WE JUST WENT TO AN EXHIBITION AT CITY HALL!
IS THAT HOW YOU GOT SO FILTHY?

JUST LOOK! DIRT ALL OVER!
AND I JUST MOPPED THE WHOLE FLOOR!
NO ONE APPRECIATES THE WORK I DO...


NO! DON'T BRUSH THE DIRT OFF IN HERE! PUT THAT JACKET IN THE WASH RIGHT NOW!

GIVE IT TO ME BEFORE YOU GET EVERYTHING ELSE DIRTY!
I SAW GARGANTUA OR ONE OF HER ANCESTORS IN THE COAL AGE! NOBODY GRIPES IF SHE'S A LITTLE DIRTY!


WE CAN TALK ABOUT THAT WHEN YOU'RE AS OLD AS SHE IS! LITTLE BABY DRAGONS WHO AREN'T EVEN A HUNDRED YET CAN STAND TO LEARN HOW TO BE NEAT AND CLEAN...
YEAH, SURE!

SAM and MAX FREELANCE POLICE IN:

NIGHT OF THE GRINGING WILDEBEEST

BASED ON THE BROADWAY MUSICAL: SAM AND MAX GO TO THE CARNIVAL

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY STEVE PURCELL
LETTERED BY: L. LOIS BUHALIS

WELL HERE WE ARE AT THE CARNIVAL, MAX

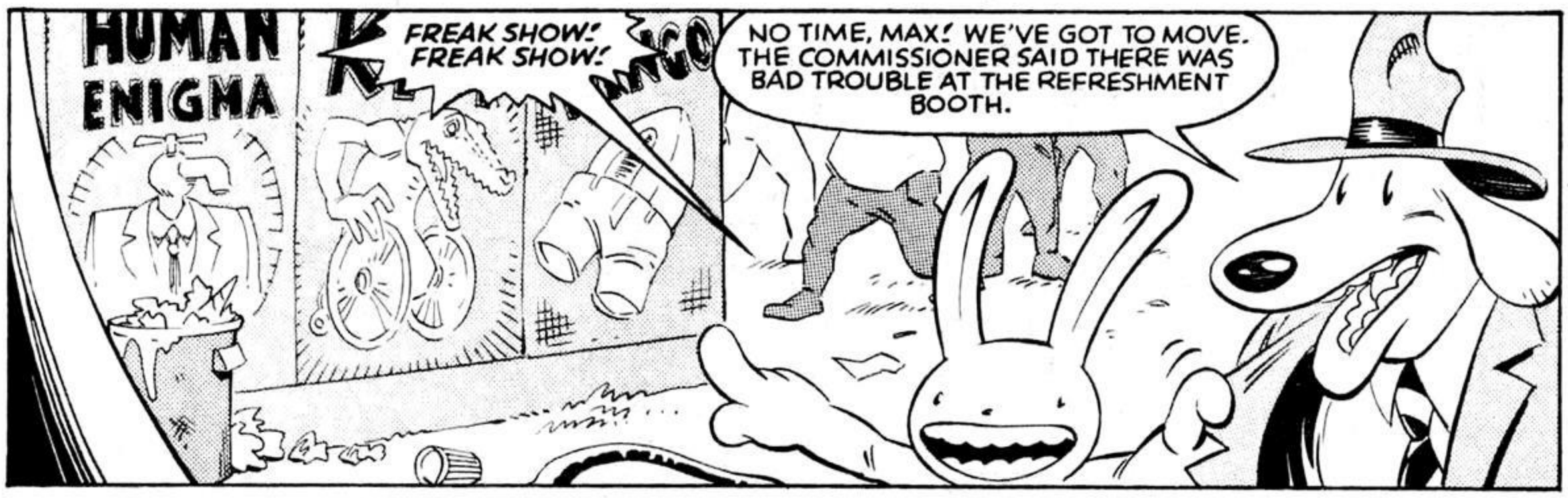
IT'S A HATEFUL AND UNWHOLESOME PLACE, SAM!

IT DOES HAVE A CERTAIN PERVERSE FASCINATION, DOESN'T IT, LITTLE BUDDY?

CONE OF TRAGEDY

BORN TO FIGHT DINOSAURS

SAN DIE



DON'T STARTLE HIM LIKE THAT, MISTER CLOWN. HE'S PACKING A ROD (SOMEPLACE). I'VE SEEN HIM SHOOT ONE OF THOSE ENDEARING POM HATS RIGHT OFF ONE OF YOU GUYS.

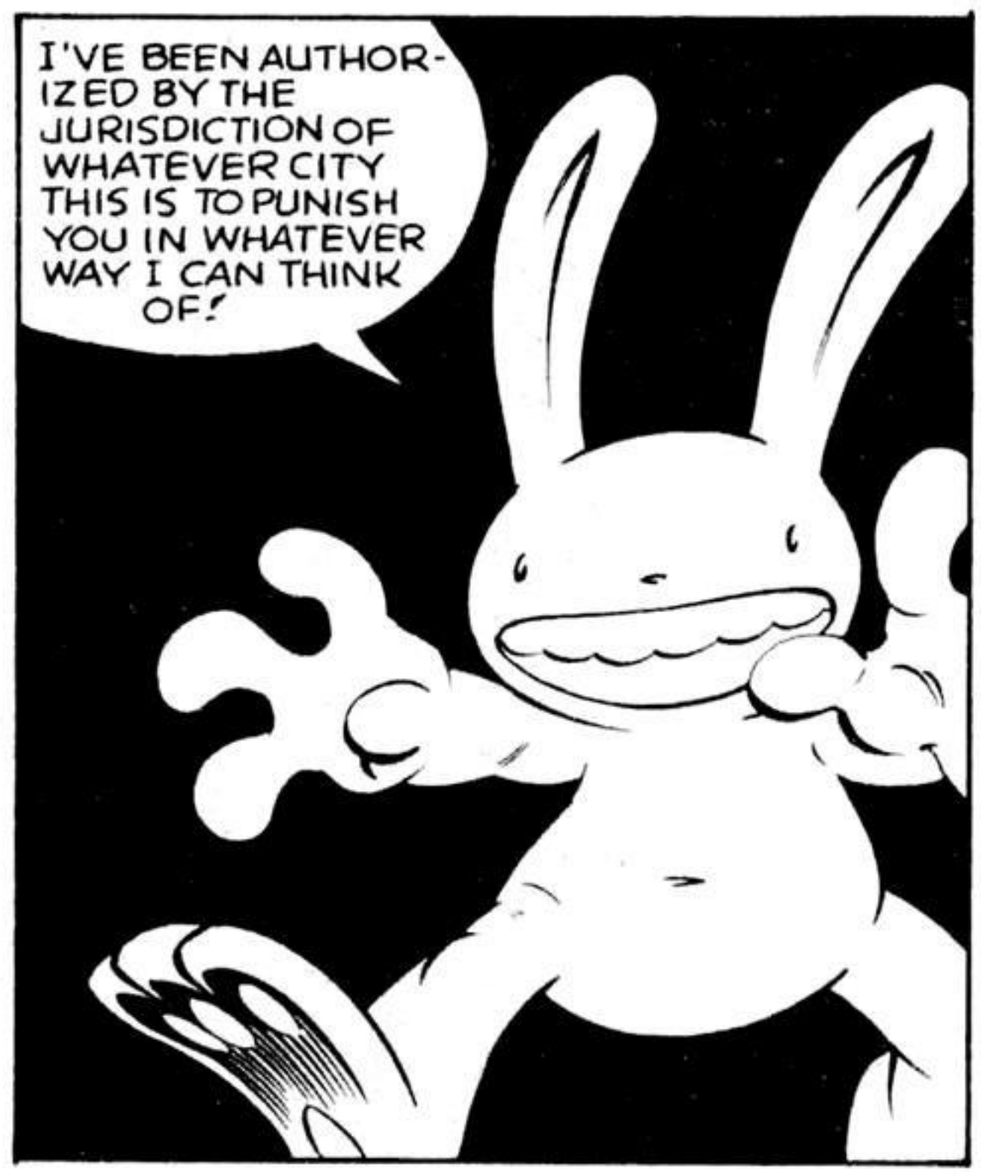
HE SHOULDN'T HAVE STARTLED ME. I HATE THAT.
OILY DEVIL, WASN'T HE? Ah, HERE WE ARE.
LIVE MICE
YEAH. IT WAS JUST LAST SUMMER. LITTLE FELLA WAS SWANG BY HIS LEG TILL IT WAS POPPED CLEAN OFF. DAMNDEST THING I EVER SAW.
BORN TO WORK HERE TILL JESUS COMES BACK OR I DIE

REFRESHME
TWO BIG DRY ELASTIC CORN DOGS, PLEASE.
GYROS

JUST AS I THOUGHT. BOOTLEG CORNDOGS! DEFICIENT IN ALL THE MAJOR CORNDOG INGREDIENTS REQUIRED BY THE USDA: PORK CHEEKS AND EYELIDS, BEEF PORES... AND IT TASTES LIKE THE PERCENTAGE OF INSECT KNEES AND LIPS IS A TAD HIGH.

YOU'VE BEEN SELLING BOOTLEG CORNDOGS FROM SOUTH AMERICA! WHERE ALL THE WORLD'S WORST LOOKING ANIMALS COME FROM. YOU'RE TAKING THE FALL, SON.
BANG!
IT'S FOOODE

I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO SAY IN THIS PANEL. TAKE CARE OF HIM, MAX.
PRODUCT OF ARGENTINA


I'VE BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE JURISDICTION OF WHATEVER CITY THIS IS TO PUNISH YOU IN WHATEVER WAY I CAN THINK OF!

I TOLD THEM KIDS TO KEEP THEIR ARMS INSIDE THE RIDE. DAMNDEST THING I EVER SAW.
WONDER HOW THE LITTLE GUY'S DOING. OH, HERE HE COMES NOW.
I'M WITH STUPID

I WON YOU A STUFFED HORSEY, MAX. WHAT DID YOU DO WITH THE FIENDISH REFRESHMENT VENDOR?
I MADE HIM EAT ALL THE CORNDOGS AND THEN I PADLOCKED HIM INTO THE ROCK-O-PLANE!
FIZZ BALL

IT WAS HORRIBLE!

GOOD WORK, MAX! HEY, LET'S CATCH THAT FREAK SHOW NOW. I HEAR THEY HAVE THE BEST RODENT-HEADED BOY IN THE STATE! NOT COUNTING YOURSELF, OF COURSE.
I'M A LAGOMORPH, SAM! LOOK IT UP!
YOU CRACK ME UP, LITTLE PAL!
FREAKS FREAKS FREAKS
TILT-O WHIR
·END·

Welcome to the Fantagraphics

ADVENTURES OF CAPT. JACK

Adventures of Captain Jack #3: Part 2 of "Sat. Night": Herman and Beezlebub visit the netherworld.

Adventures of Captain Jack #4: Maniacal astronauts and a batty back-up strip.

Adventures of Captain Jack #5: "Farmer Fred, I'm In Love With Your Daughter" Part 1: Arrival on Janet's planet. (This is the one that drove the distributors nuts around the country.)

Adventures of Captain Jack #6: Part 2: Herman and Janet decide to go away together.

Adventures of Captain Jack #7: Part 3: Beezlebub intrudes in Herman and Janet's relationship.

Adventures of Captain Jack #8: A daring escape, the Captain in drag, and more.

Adventures of Captain Jack #9: Pool hustling with Saturated Fats, and the conclusion of the storyline!

CRITTERS

Critters #4: *Gnuff* and *Birthright* continue, *Lionheart* premieres, and the first Ken Macklin cover painting!

Critters #5: *Birthright* continues, the first *Gnuff* novel concludes (with a cover), plus Stan Sakai's *Nilson Groundthumper*!

Critters #6: *Usagi Yojimbo* tale with cover, *Birthright* concludes, and the first *Firecracker Jack* by Mark Armstrong!

COPYRIGHT © RESPECTIVE ARTISTS: Freddy Milton, Bob Foster, Reed Waller and Kate Worley, Steve Lafler, Stan Sakai, Mike Kazaleh, Milton Knight, Sam Kieth, Steven A. Gallacci, Ty Templeton

Critters #8: *Jack Bunny* by cover artist Mark Armstrong, Templeton Kelly tribute, and *Lionheart* begins.

Critters #9: Hallowe'en issue with Gnuff behind a mask, Lionheart's nightmare, and Dog Boy.

Critters #10: *Usagi Yojimbo* cover and story, plus the continuations of *Gnuff* and *Lionheart*.

Critters #11: Special Christmas issue, featuring the conclusions of *Usagi Yojimbo, Gnuff*, and *Lionheart*, plus work by Mike Kazaleh, J. Holland and Ron Wilber, Mark Armstrong, Ty Templeton, Sam Kieth, Steve Lafler, and Ken Macklin. 68 pages!

Critters #12: *Birthright* returns, with a cover by Gallacci, plus Reed Waller and Kate Worley, and Sam Kieth!

Critters #13: *Gnuff* cover and 16-page chapter, plus *Birthright, Surfin' Neanderthals* by Mark Armstrong.

Critters #14: *Usagi Yojimbo* story and cover, plus *Birthright* and *Gnuff* continue.

Critters #15: *The Blue Beagle* and *Fission Chicken* both debut, and *Birthright* races on!

Critters #16: The conclusion to *Gnuff*, another *Nilson Groundthumper*, and *Birthright* reaches a climax.

Critters #17: *Lionheart* returns in a two-part Canadian adventure, plus the conclusion of *Birthright*.

Critters #18: *Leggo Lamb* by Jim Engel premieres. Also, the conclusion to *Lionheart*, and *Blue Beagle*.

Critters #19: *Gnuff* returns in a tale of nature gone wild, plus *Speakingstone* by Waller and Worley, *Sam and Max, Freelance Police, Dragons*, and *Fission Chicken*.

Critters Special #1—Nilson Groundthumper and Hermy: Both the *Albedo* stories, plus a new 10-page strip!

DOG BOY

Dog Boy #1: Journey off into surreal experiences with "Werewolf Bikers" and more!

Dog Boy #2: Sir Isaac Newton guest stars as reality unravels.

Dog Boy #3: Dog Boy shows how to publish your own comic book.

Dog Boy #4: Dog Boy goes to Hell, plus Dog Girl invades the White House. Guest starring Reagan!

Dog Boy #5: An experiment misfires, and Dog Boy and Benb combine to form . . . Dogb! Oh no!

Dog Boy #6: "Drinkin' Man's Blues," with a striking painted cover.

Dog Boy #7: He be Doog Boog. Jazzy issue exploring Dog Boy's multiple personalities!

HUGO

Hugo #1: Milton (*Midnite*) Knight's feline "Meets the Baron."

Hugo #2: Hugo becomes a cartoonist and gets into deep trouble.

Hugo #3: Hugo is abducted by mermaids and fights sharks.

MYRON MOOSE

Myron Moose Funnies #1: Lots of goofy snot jokes, plus parodies of Dr. Seuss and Uncle Wriggly books.

Myron Moose Funnies #2: Parodies of Batman, Mickey Mouse, The Spirit, and lots more.

USAGI YOJIMBO

Usagi Yojimbo #1 *(2nd printing)*: Usagi journeys tells how he became a samurai. Plus: Dennis Fujitake!

Usagi Yojimbo #2: Usagi goes into training and has his first duel. Plus: A new strip by Dave Thorne.

Usagi Yojimbo #3: The continuation of "Samurai," and a "Croakers" strip by Don Dougherty.

Usagi Yojimbo #4: The conclusion to Usagi's origin, and the first half of a penguin strip by Gary Kato.

Usagi Yojimbo #5: A one-issue tale of silk, treachery, and greed, and the conclusion of the penguin tale by Kato.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND OTHER STUFF

Usagi Yojimbo Book One: Every *Usagi Yojimbo* story before *Usagi* #1 collected in one handy 160-page volume, with a new Stan Sakai cover.

Amazing Heroes #9: Behind the scenes of DC's *Captain Carrot* comic with Scott Shaw! and Roy Thomas. Plus a funny-animal pictorial.

Amazing Heroes #42: Funny-animal issue with Joshua Quagmire cover and interview. Plus: Arn Saba on Neil the Horse and Dave Sim on Cerebus!

Amazing Heroes #111: Ty Templeton (of *Critters*) interviewed. It's funny.

The Comics Journal #73: Carl Barks featured, with long retrospective.

The Comics Journal #81-82: Mammoth interview with Dave (*Cerebus the Aardvark*) Sim.

The Comics Journal #99: Long interview with Arn (*Neil the Horse*) Saba.

Anything Goes! #3: Featuring a full-color Captain Jack story by Mike Kazaleh, Cerebus vignette by Dave Sim, and Cerebus cover by Neal Adams.

Anything Goes! #6: Cover painting by Stan Sakai of Usagi Yojimbo, worth the cover price.

NEMO #21: 28 pages of Jack Kent's classic *King Aroo* strip—a treat for classic funny-animal lovers!

PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING BACK ISSUES.
All are $2.25 apiece unless otherwise indicated.

Capt. Jack: ☐#3 ☐#4 ☐#5 ☐#6 ☐#7 ☐#8 ☐#9
☐ 6-issue subscription to *Captain Jack*: $9.00

Critters: ☐#4 ☐#5 ☐#6 ☐#8 ☐#9 ☐#10 ☐#11 ($3.75)
☐#12 ☐#13 ☐#14 ☐#15 ☐#16 ☐#17 ☐#18
☐#19 ☐#20 ☐#21
☐ 12-issue subscription to *Critters*: $17.00

Critters Special: ☐#1 **Hugo:** ☐#1 ☐#2 ☐#3

Dog Boy ($2.00): ☐#1 ☐#2 ☐#3 ☐#4 ☐#5 ☐#6 ☐#7
☐ 6-issue subscription to *Dog Boy*: $8.00

Myron Moose ($2.00): ☐#1 ☐#2 ☐#3

Usagi Yojimbo: ☐#1 ☐#2 ☐#3 ☐#4 ☐#5
☐**Book One**: $10.00
☐ 6-issue subscription to *Usagi Yojimbo*: $9.00

Amazing Heroes ($3.00): ☐#9 ☐#42 ☐#111
☐ 12-issue subscription to *Amazing Heroes*: $25.00

The Comics Journal ($3.50): ☐#73 ☐#82 ☐#83 ☐#99
☐ 9-issue subscription to *The Comics Journal*: $25.00

Anything Goes: ☐#3 ☐#6 **NEMO ($4.00):** ☐#21

name

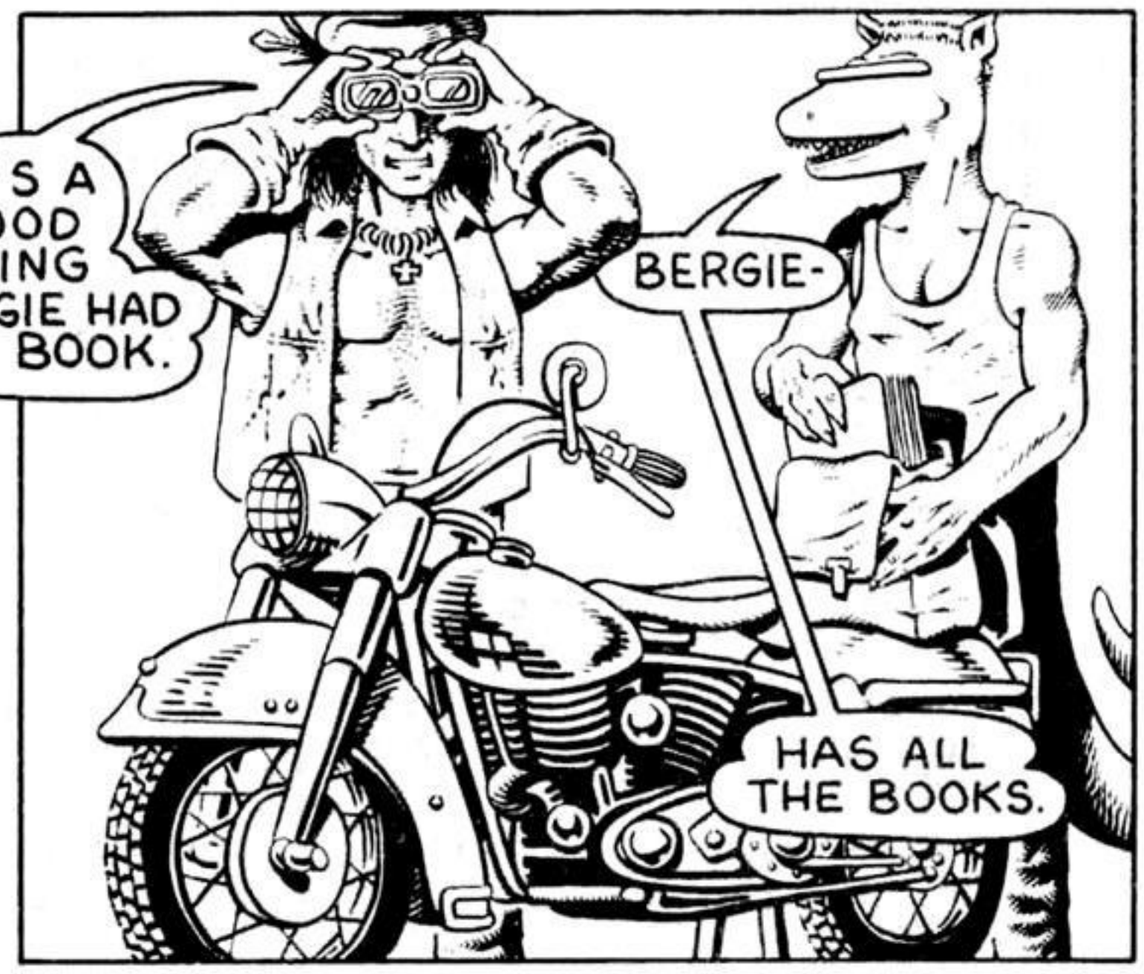
address

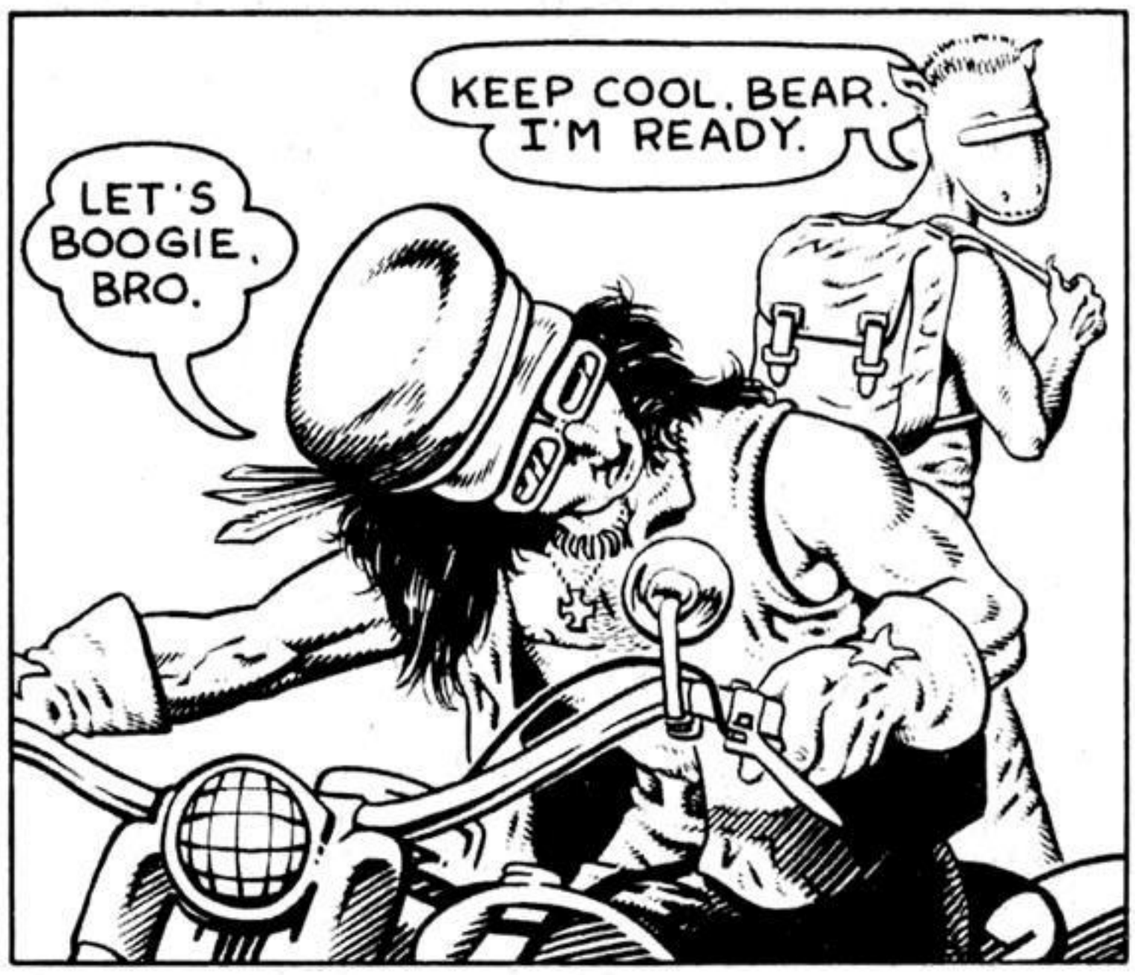
city

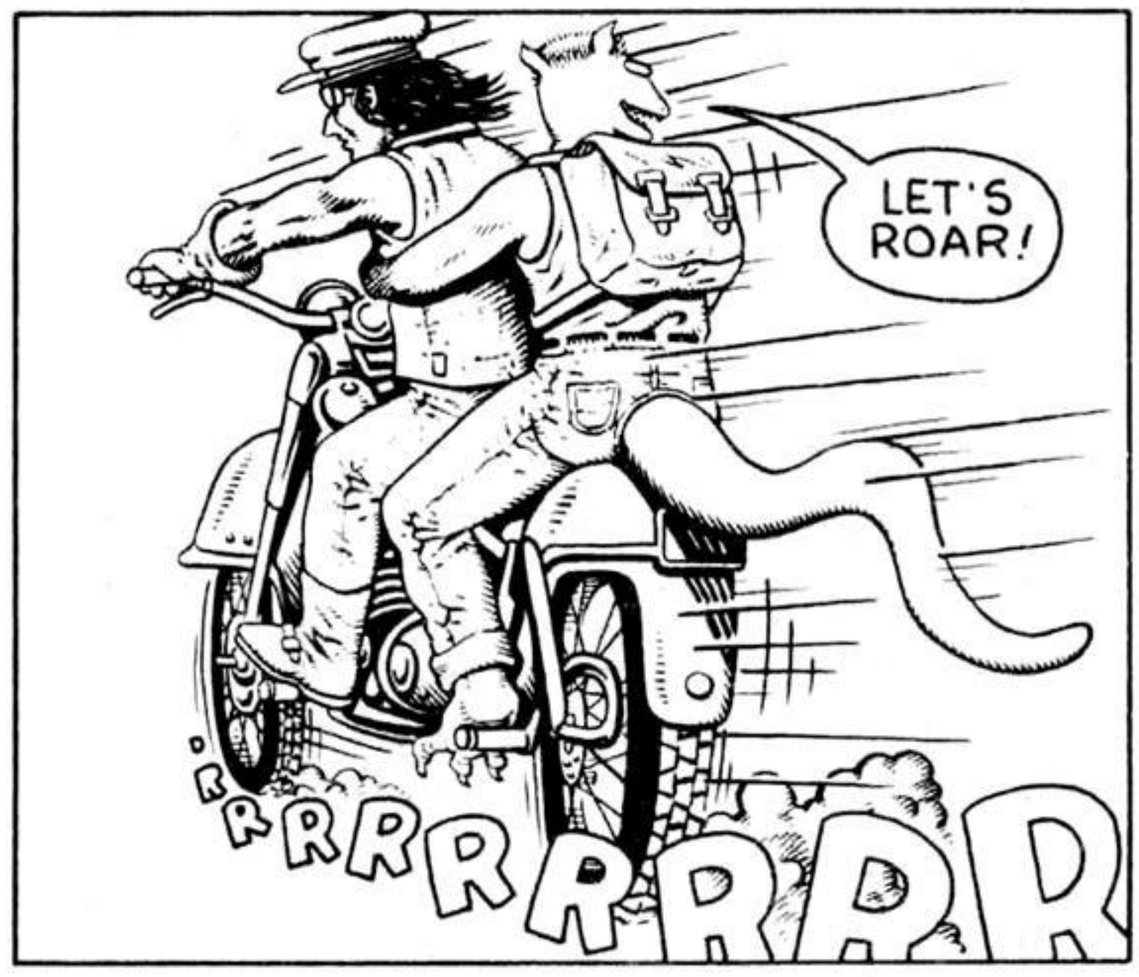
state zip

NOTE: *You must be 18 years or older to order* Captain Jack, Dog Boy, Hugo, *or* Myron Moose.

Send all orders to ***Fantagraphics Books, 1800 Bridgegate Road, Suite 101, Westlake Village, CA 91361****. Outside U.S. and Canada, please add 15% to cover additional postage. Drive carefully, and don't forget to stop and feed the ducks.*

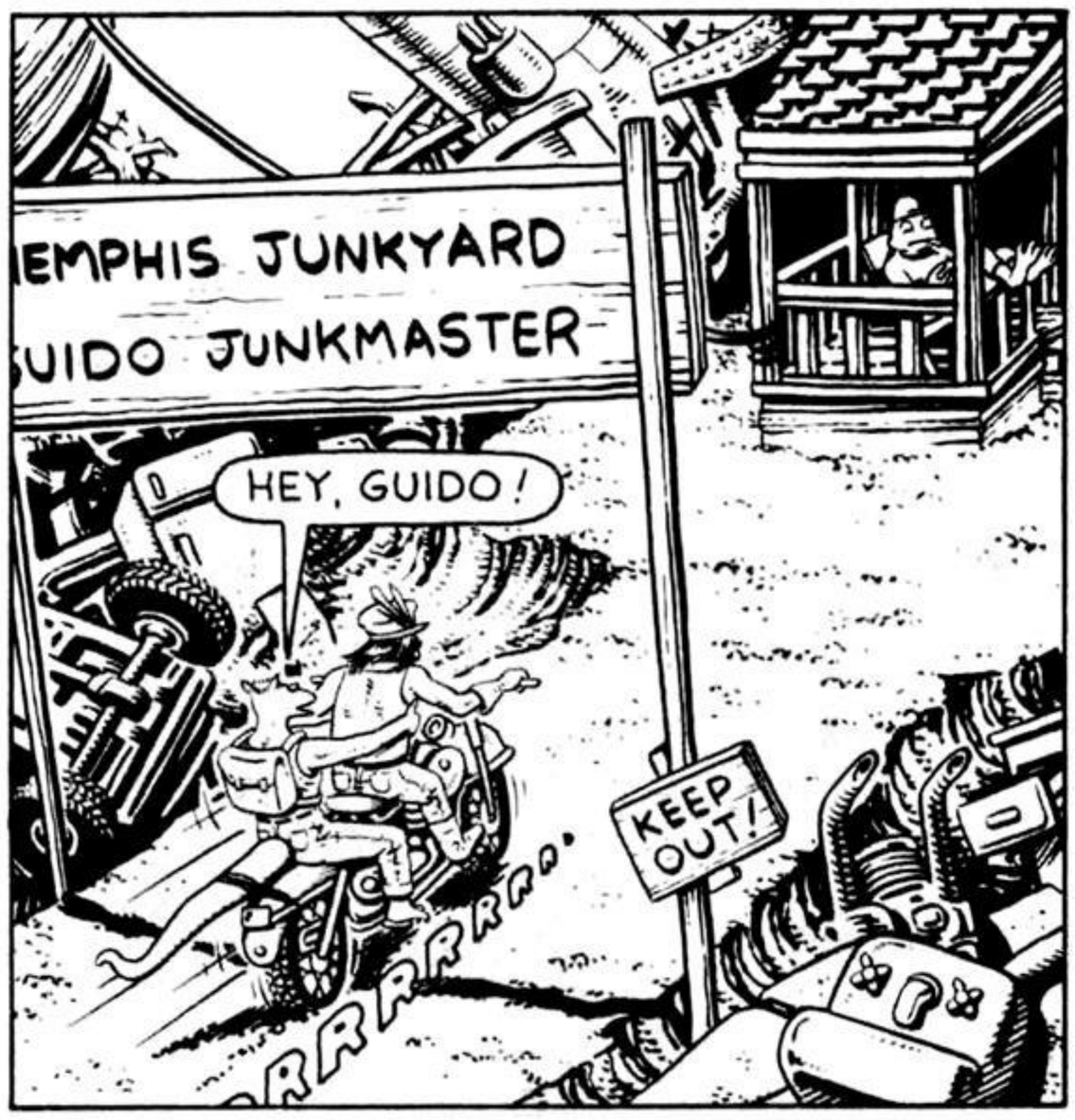






REPAIRS

© J. HOLLAND - STORY
+ R. WILBER - ART '87


EMPHIS JUNKYARD
UIDO JUNKMASTER
HEY, GUIDO!
KEEP OUT!
RRRRRRR

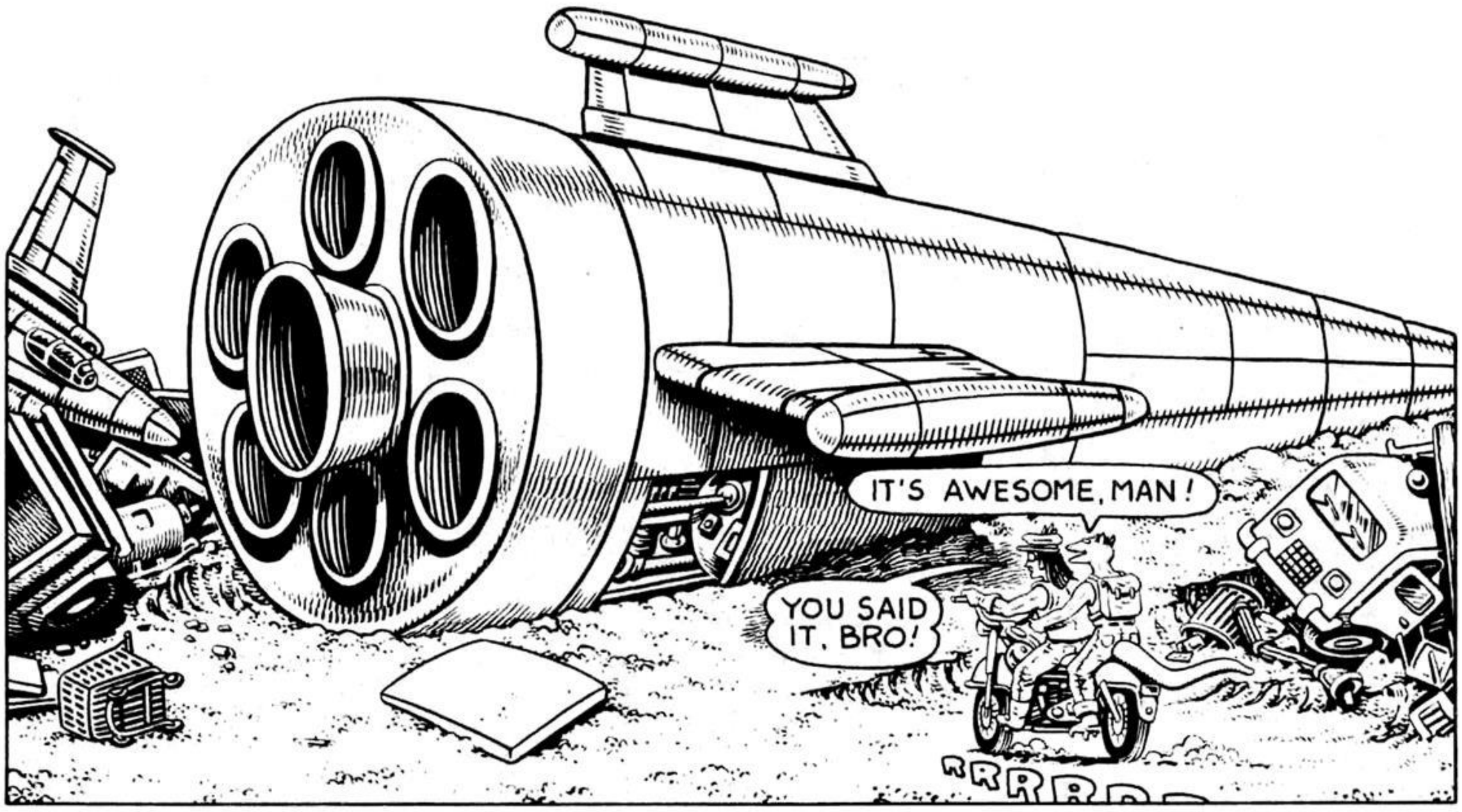
WAKE UP, GUIDO!
I'M AWAKE! I'M AWAKE! KEEP IT DOWN!
WHAT DO YOU TWO WANT NOW?

WE WANNA CHECK OUT THAT SHIP WE FOUND YESTERDAY.
SURE. SURE. WHAT DO I CARE?

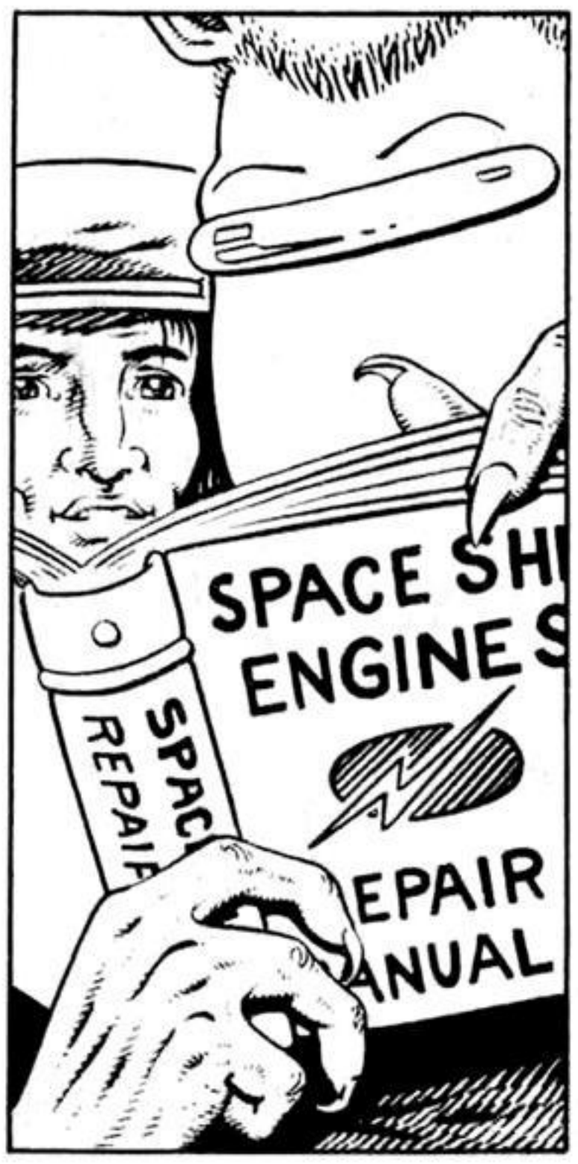
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY WE BOTHERED ASKING GUIDO.
YEAH,
BUT IT NEVER HURTS TO MAKE SURE. SOMETIMES GUIDO CAN BE PRETTY PROTECTIVE OF THIS JUNKYARD.

BOY, OLD PEOPLE SURE ARE WEIRD.
YOU WON'T HEAR ME ARGUE WITH YOU ABOUT THAT, BEAR.

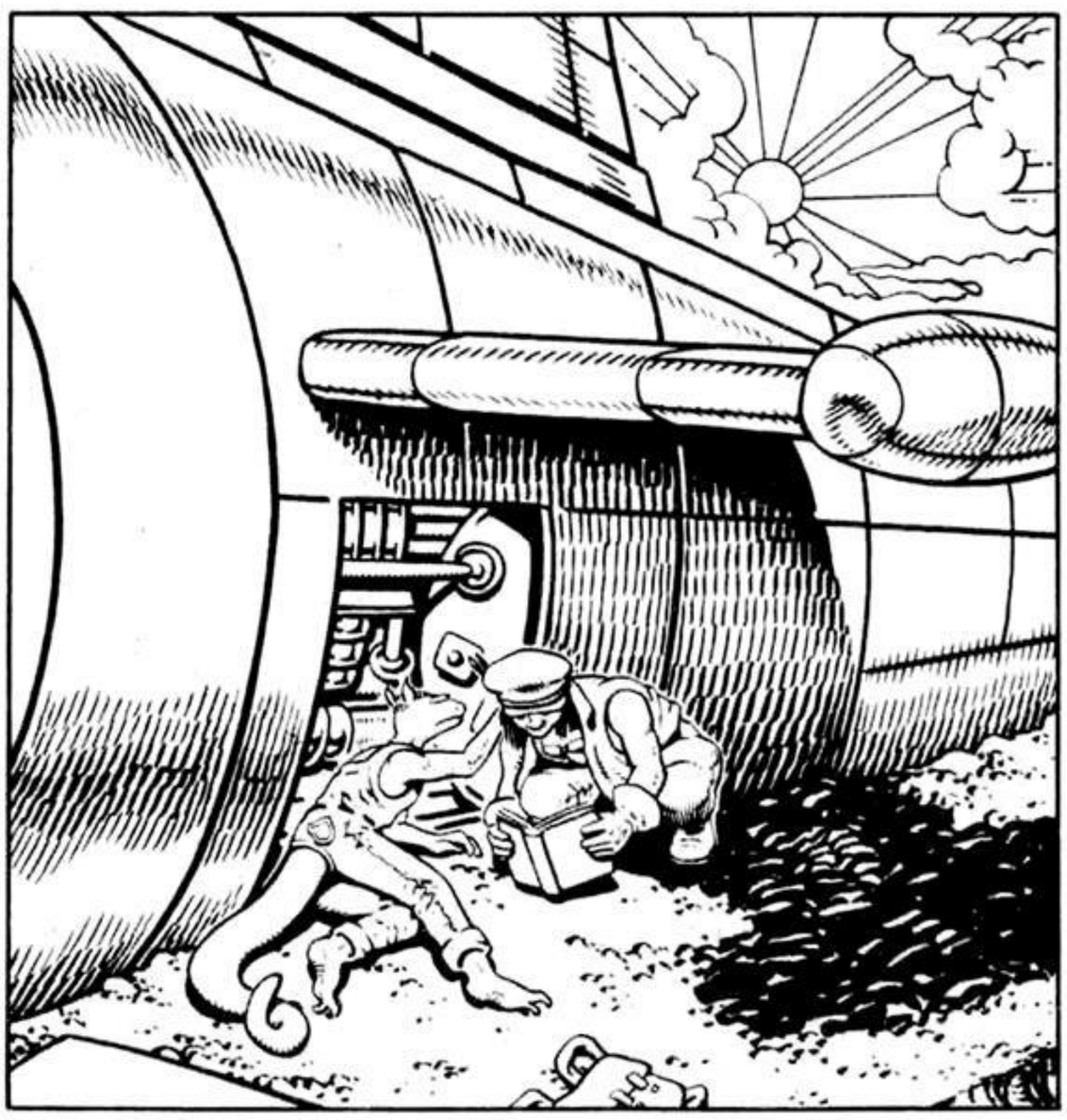
RRRRRRRRRR


IT'S AWESOME, MAN!
YOU SAID IT, BRO!
RRRRRR

THINK WE CAN FIX IT?
ABSOLUTELY!


SPACE SH
ENGINE S
SPAC
REPAIR
EPAIR
ANUAL

WE GET THIS BIRD FLYING MEMPHIS IS NOTHING BUT A MEMORY.
YOU SAID IT, BRO!



LOOKING GOOD, BRO!
IT WON'T START.

DAMN! IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK! WHY DOESN'T IT WORK?
KICK
SWIIISSH!!
WAIT, I'M LOOKING. HMMMM... I'M NOT SURE.

WE THOUGHT IT TOOK SOLAR CHIPS LIKE THE BIKE, BUT I DON'T THINK IT DOES.
WHAT DOES IT USE FOR FUEL THEN?

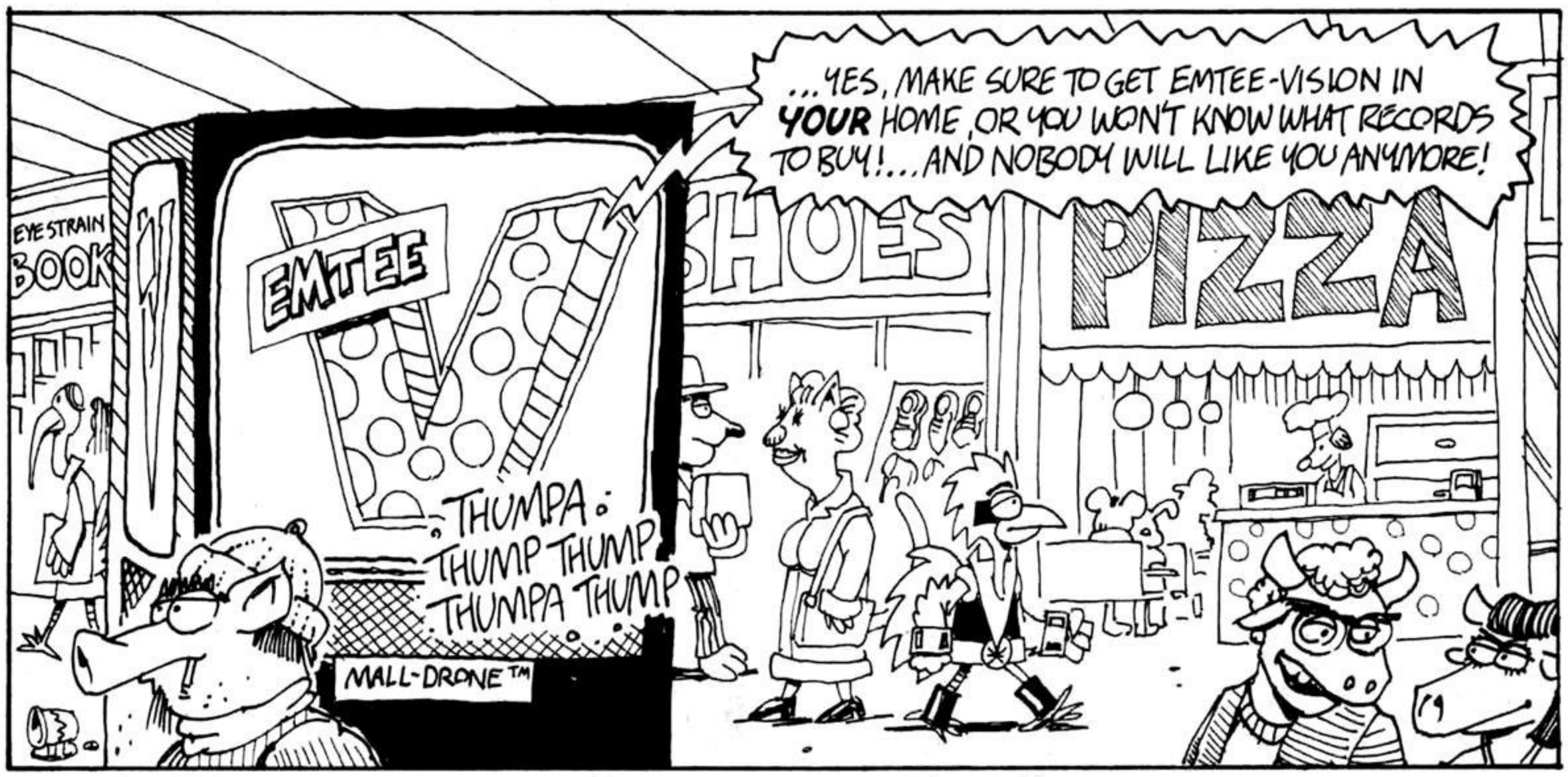
SOMETHING ABOUT A NUCLEAR REACTOR. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.
I DO.

IT MEANS WE AIN'T FLYING, BRO.
YEAH.

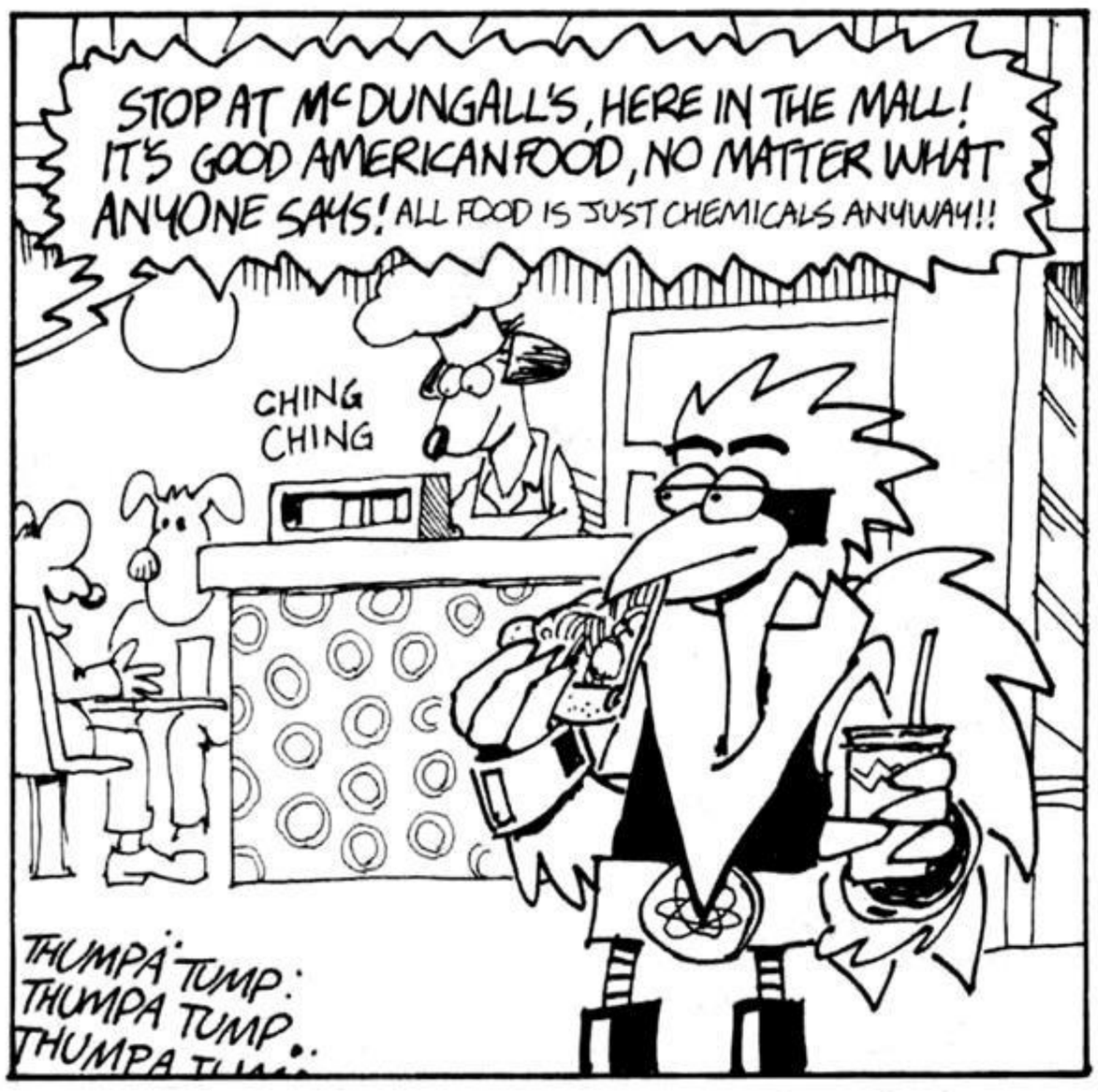
LET'S GET BERGIE HIS BOOK BACK.
YEAH, BEFORE HE SLAPS AN OVERDUE CHARGE ON US.

CAN YOU SEE YOUR OLD MAN IF WE HAD THIS THING WORKING, DWEEZ?
YEAH.
HE WOULD HAVE DIED.

THE END

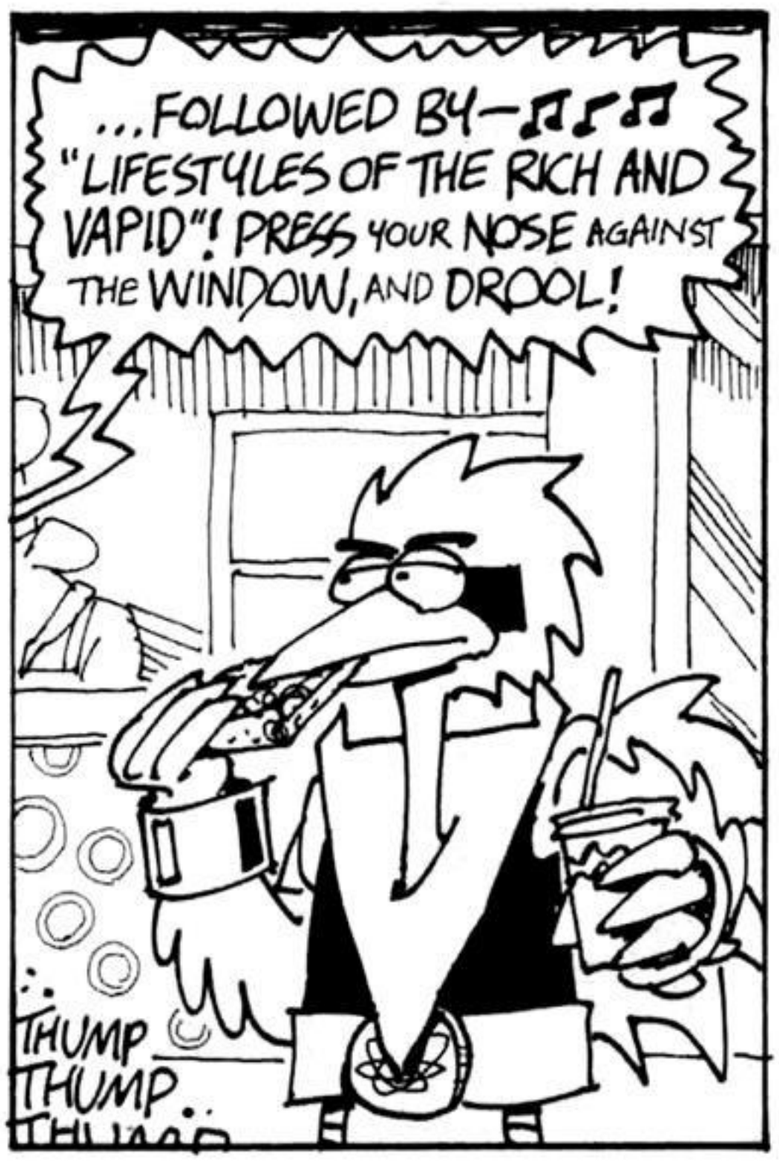

...YES, MAKE SURE TO GET EMTEE-VISION IN YOUR HOME, OR YOU WON'T KNOW WHAT RECORDS TO BUY!...AND NOBODY WILL LIKE YOU ANYMORE!
EYE STRAIN BOOK
EMTEE
THUMPA THUMP THUMP THUMPA THUMP
MALL-DRONE™
SHOES
PIZZA

COMING SOON: LAMBO-FIRST BLED, PART 9! HE BLOWS UP COMMIES REAL GOOD, THE WAY YOU LIKE IT! BOOM! KSH! AIEE!!
THUMPA TUMP TUMP THUMPA TUMP
STATE U


STOP AT McDUNGALL'S, HERE IN THE MALL! IT'S GOOD AMERICAN FOOD, NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE SAYS! ALL FOOD IS JUST CHEMICALS ANYWAY!!
CHING CHING
THUMPA TUMP THUMPA TUMP THUMPA

VISIT "FAMILY VOID" HAIR DESIGNERS! YOU CAN BE HOT FOR ONLY SEVENTY DOLLARS! GIGGLE!
UMPA THUMP UMPA

8:00 TONIGHT! WATCH "HOT COOL TEENAGE NARCS"! THE MUSIC! THE CARS! THE WARDROBE!!
THUMP UMP THUMP THUMP


...FOLLOWED BY— "LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND VAPID"! PRESS YOUR NOSE AGAINST THE WINDOW, AND DROOL!
THUMP THUMP

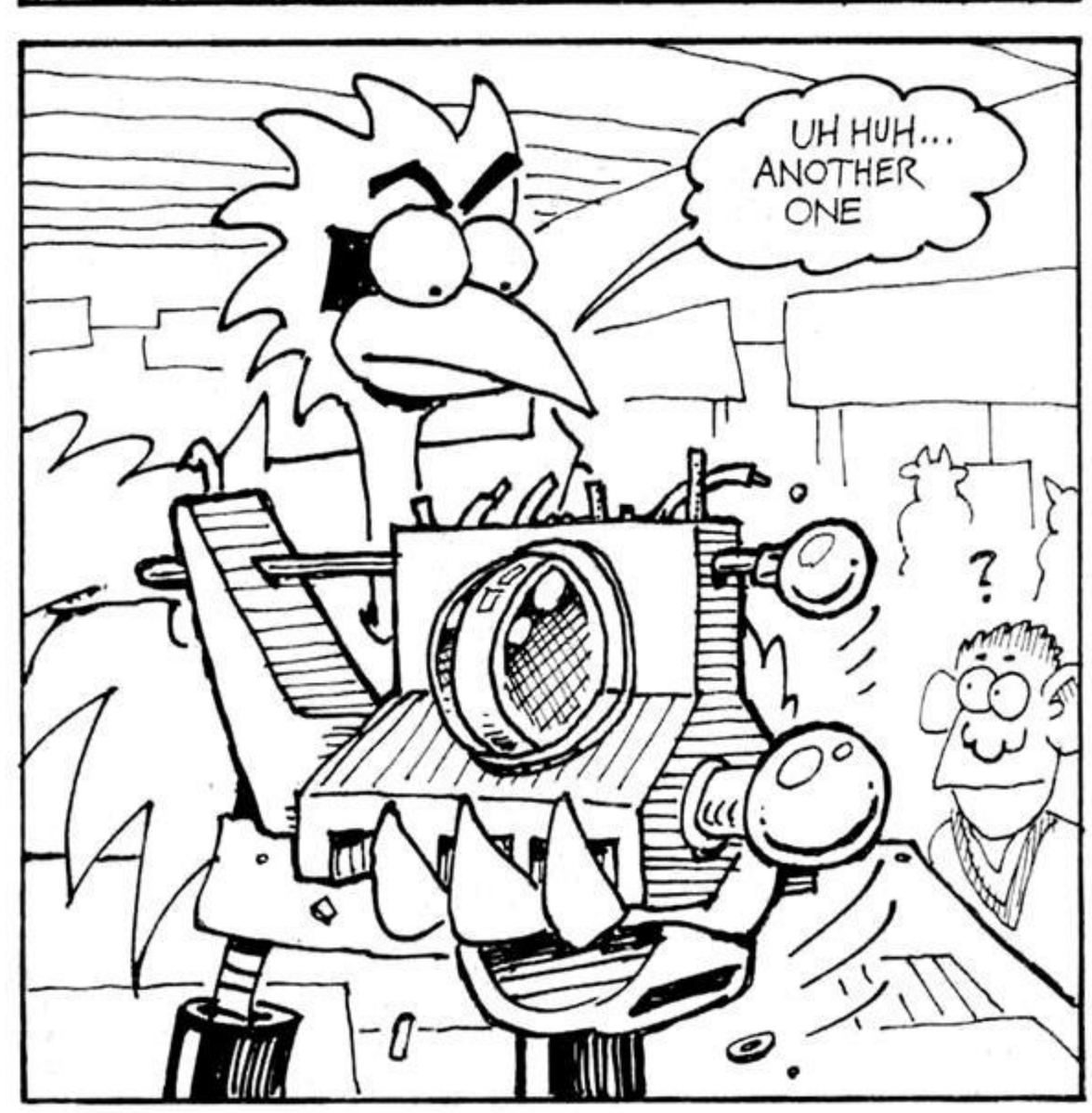
THUMP
THUMPA
THUMP
THUMPA
THUMP
THUMP
FRIDAY!: WATCH THE **MAX BATHROOM** SHOW! HE'LL INTERVIEW FAMOUS ROCKSTAR BILLY DULL, AND OFFER HIM A COLA!... MORE THAN JUST A GUY IN MAKE-UP--MORE THAN A COMPUTERIZED STUTTER--HE'S MAX BATHROOM! DON'T MISS IT!!

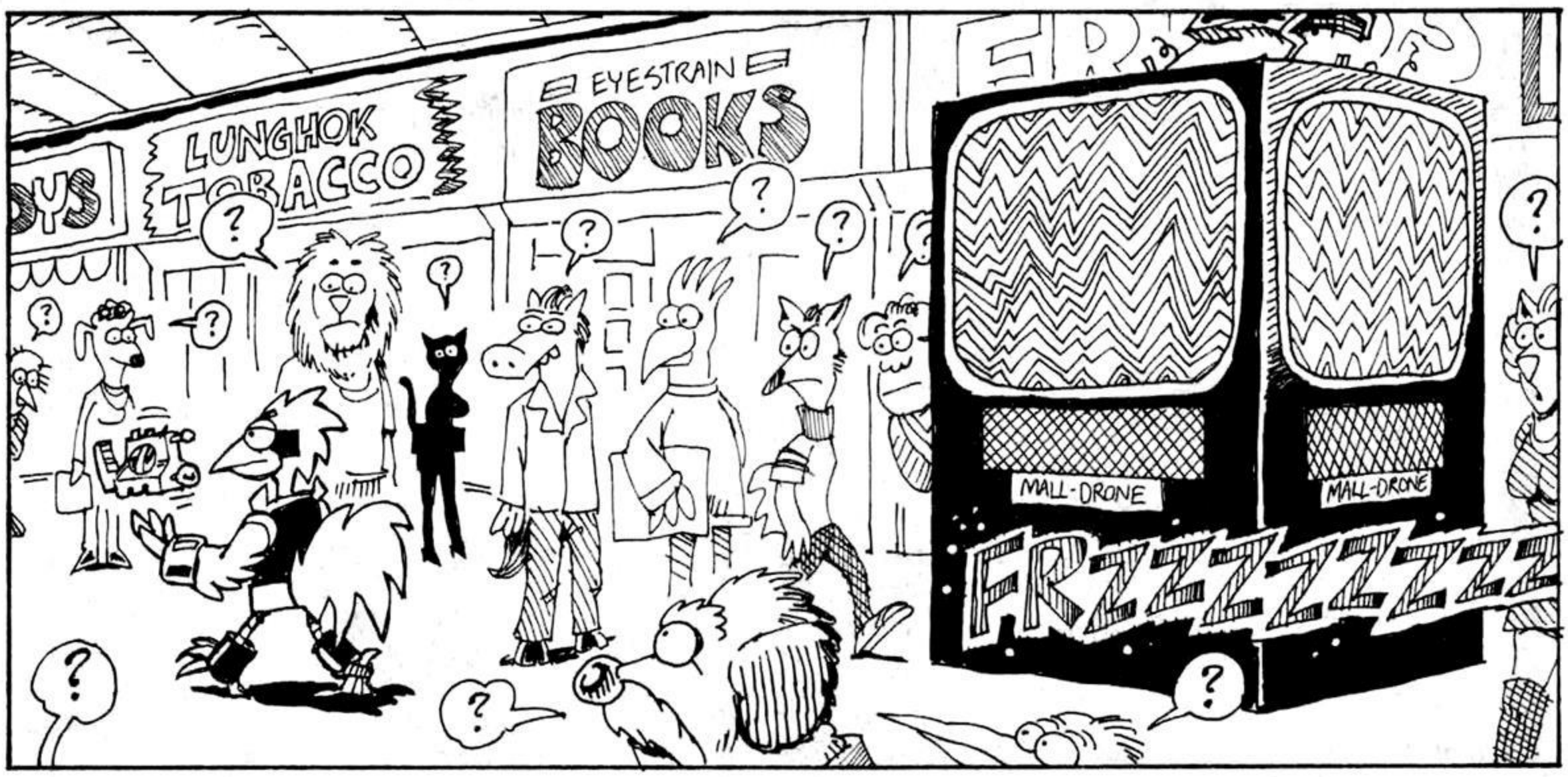
...LOOKING FOR WORK? WHY NOT JOIN THE ARMY? YOU'RE NOT DOING ANYTHING ELSE! BESIDES, IT'S LOTS OF FUN, JUST LIKE "LAMBO" OR "POP GUN"!
UMP
THUMPA
UMP UMP
HUMP
UMP UMP

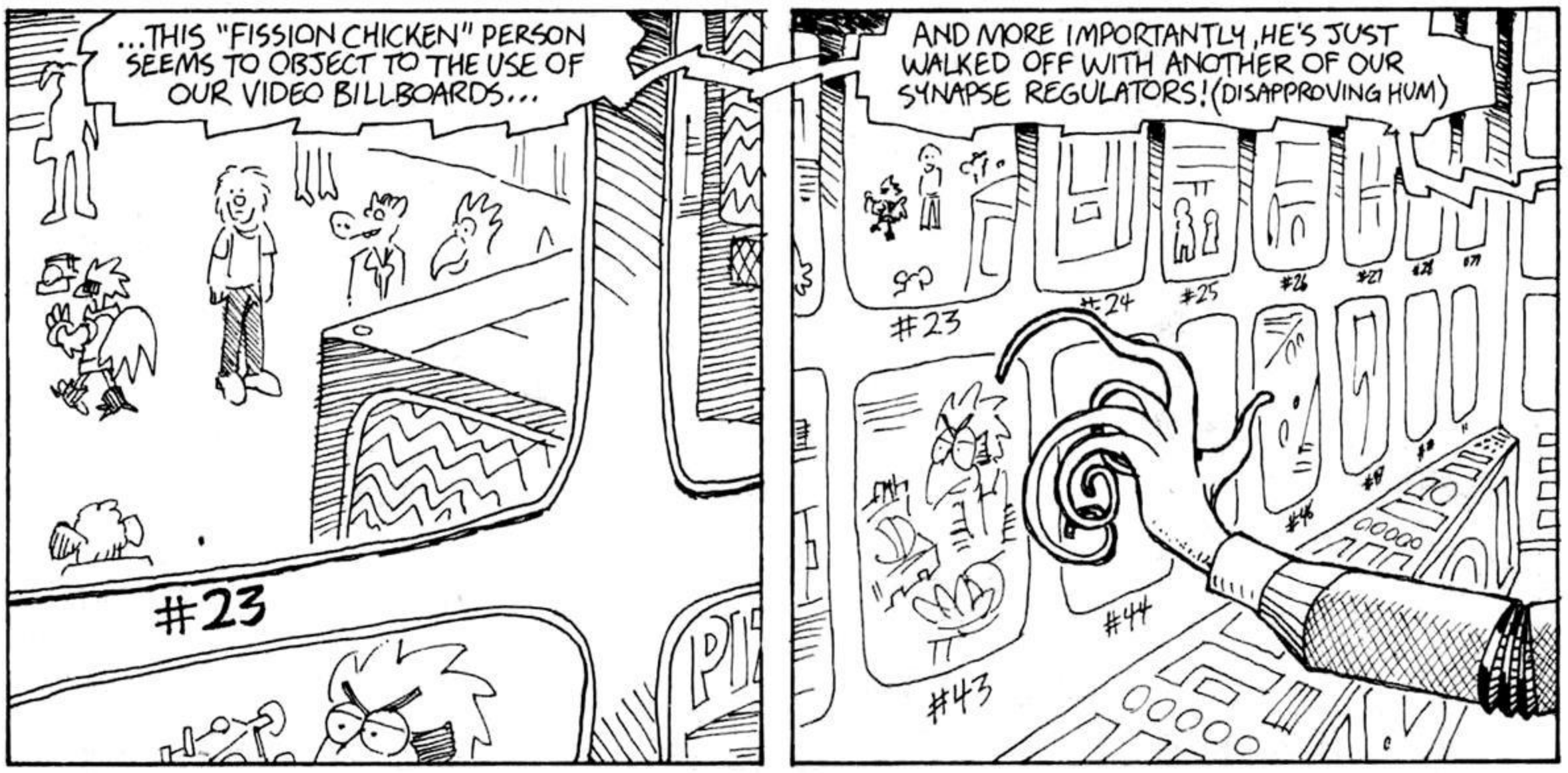
HEY!! DON'T FORGET TO STOP AT THE LOCAL RECORD HOLE™ OUTLET! DON'T FORGET TO BUY THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL...
THUMPA
THUMPA
THUMPA
ALL-DRONE™

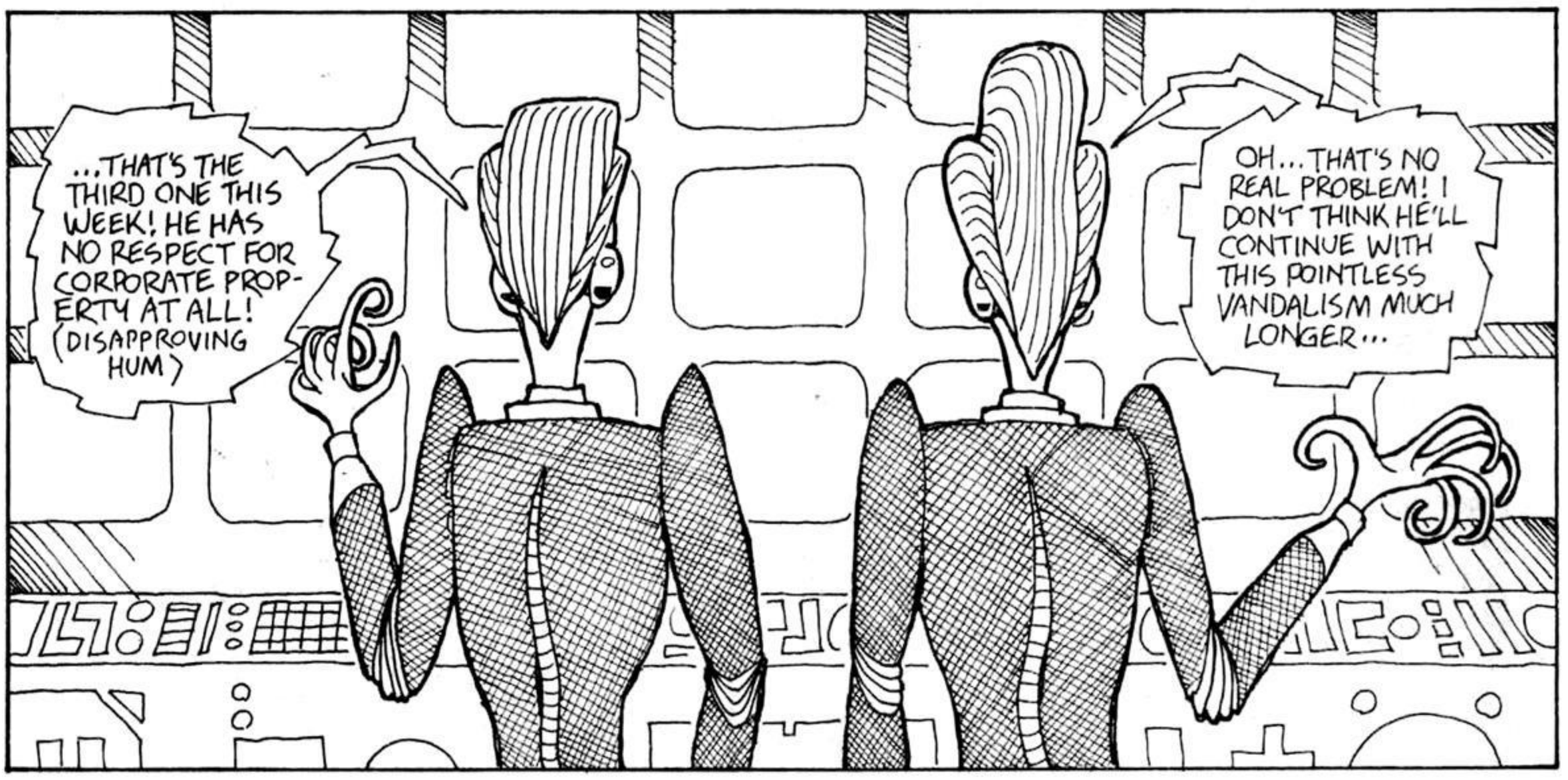
LEAP
THE NEW 5-RECORD SOUNDTRACK TO MICKEY JACKSON'S $30 MILLION DITSYLAND™ VIDEO! FULLY ILLUSTRATED BOOKLET

CRUNK
RIP
PTUNK
STOCK UP NOW ON DEFORMERS™!! PLASTIC ROBOTS THAT TURN INTO URK


UH HUH... ANOTHER ONE
?


LUNGHOK TOBACCO
EYESTRAIN BOOKS
MALL-DRONE
MALL-DRONE
FRZZZZZZZ


...THIS "FISSION CHICKEN" PERSON SEEMS TO OBJECT TO THE USE OF OUR VIDEO BILLBOARDS...
#23
AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE'S JUST WALKED OFF WITH ANOTHER OF OUR SYNAPSE REGULATORS! (DISAPPROVING HUM)
#23
#24
#25
#26
#27
#43
#44


...THAT'S THE THIRD ONE THIS WEEK! HE HAS NO RESPECT FOR CORPORATE PROPERTY AT ALL! (DISAPPROVING HUM)
OH... THAT'S NO REAL PROBLEM! I DON'T THINK HE'LL CONTINUE WITH THIS POINTLESS VANDALISM MUCH LONGER...

TERROR...FROM THE BOWELS OF SPACE!!! YECH!

"MARKETING EXPERTS FROM BEYOND"

STARRING:

FISSION CHICKEN

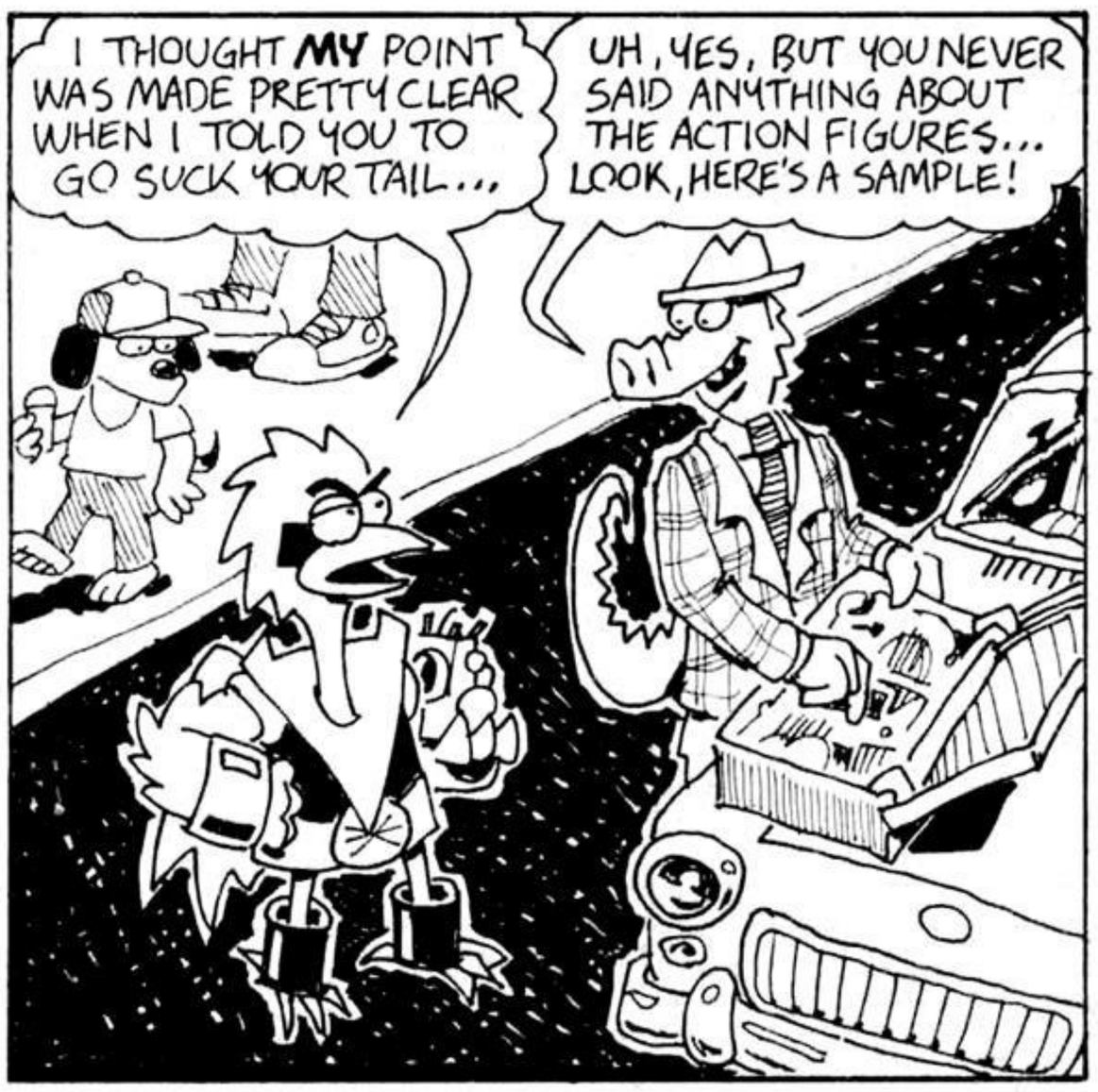
AND HIS PAL SKIP SQUIRRELHARD, P.I.!!!

IT'S A J.P. MORGAN PRODUCTION!

©1987

...WELL, I WAS RIGHT— THESE THINGS ARE ALL OVER THE PLACE! NOW I HAVE TO FIND OUT WHO'S BEEN PUTTING THEM—
FISSION CHICKEN!
...FISSION CHICKEN!!
MALL

HELLO, LOMAX! GOODBYE, LOMAX! I'M BUSY...
OH, COME ON, I JUST GOT THOSE PROTOTYPES I TOLD YOU ABOUT! NOW YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE MY POINT MORE CLEARLY!

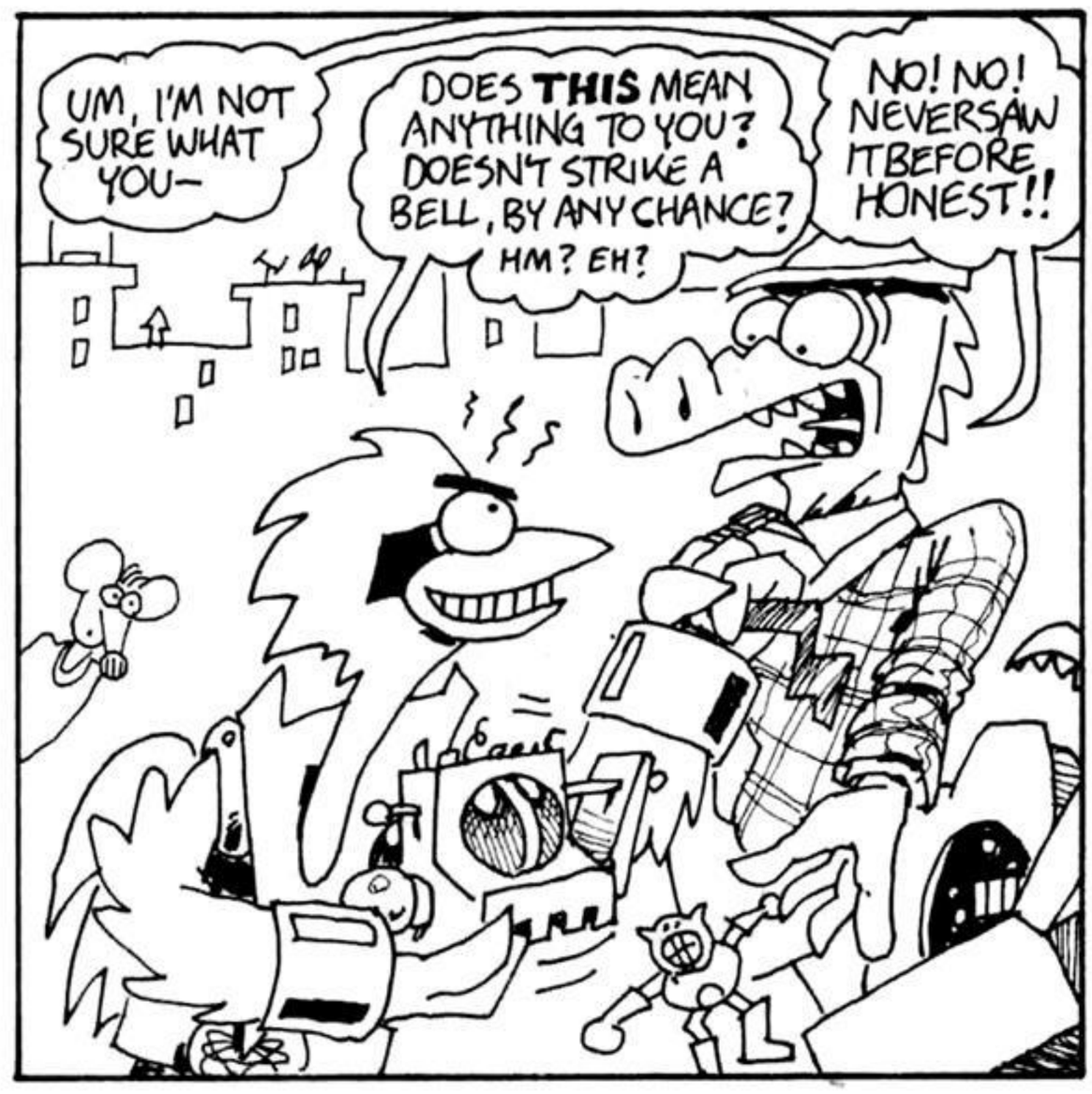

I THOUGHT MY POINT WAS MADE PRETTY CLEAR WHEN I TOLD YOU TO GO SUCK YOUR TAIL...
UH, YES, BUT YOU NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THE ACTION FIGURES... LOOK, HERE'S A SAMPLE!

THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE ME?! WHAT KIND OF DRUG AM I SUPPOSED TO BE ON?
NOW WAIT, IT LOOKS BETTER WHEN IT'S IN THE CHICKENMOBILE!
T.M.

"CHICKENMOBILE"?!
—AND OF COURSE THE KIDS WILL JUST HAVE TO HAVE THE CHICKEN-CAVE TO PARK IT IN!
T.M.

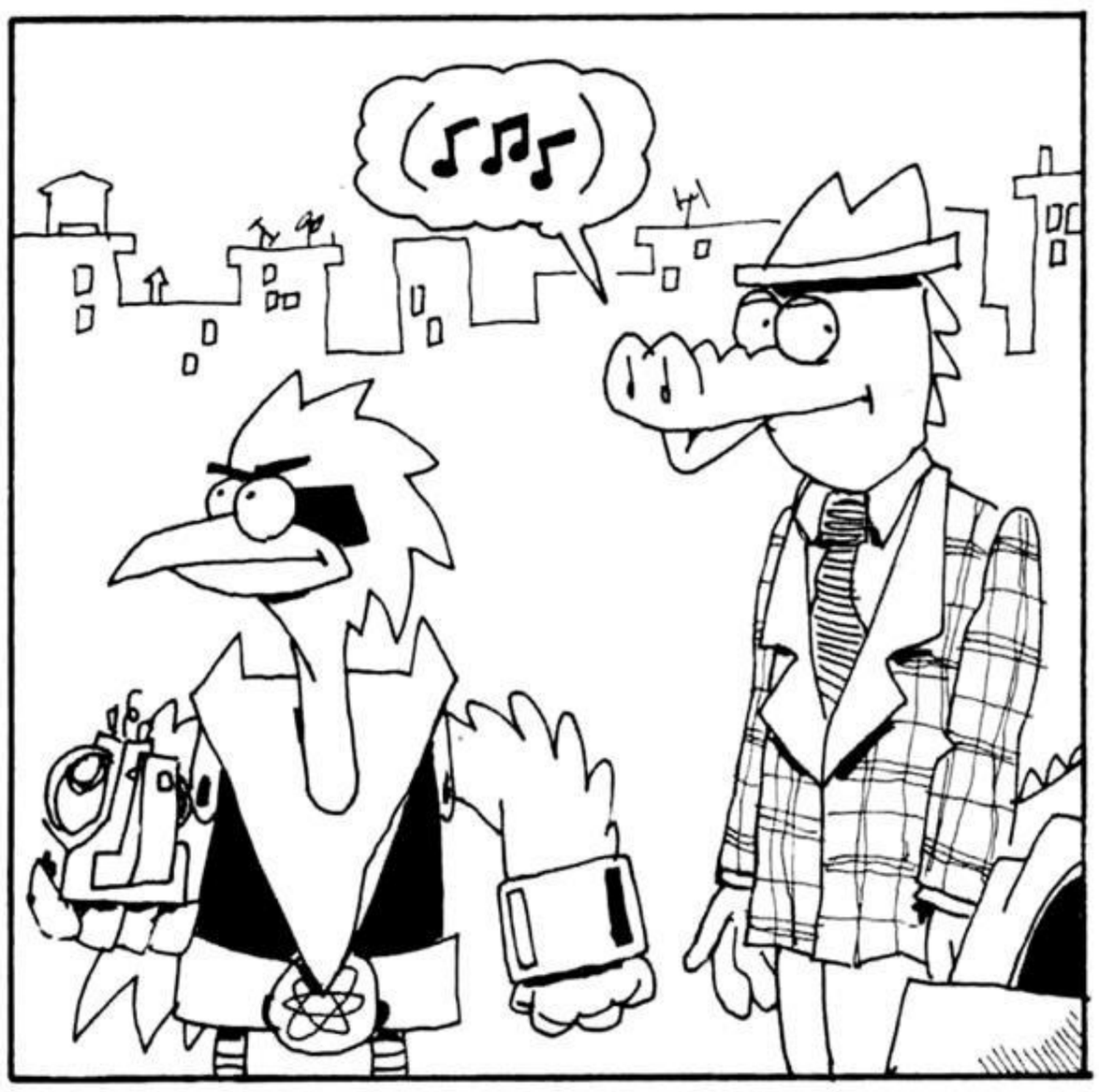
I DON'T LIVE IN A CAVE! WHAT THE HELL DO YOU TAKE ME FOR, ANYWAY?!
WAIT, WAIT, IT'S A WHOLE CONCEPT, HERE! LOOK, HERE'S FIGURES OF ALL YOUR FOES, AND ALL THEIR EQUIPMENT! WE'LL FEATURE ALL OF THIS ON THE SATURDAY MORNING CARTOON SERIES—

YOU'RE NOT WITH **THEM**, ARE YOU?
WHY, YES, I'M WITH DECAYDENCE INDUST—
NOT THEM. **THEM**.


UM, I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU—
DOES **THIS** MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU? DOESN'T STRIKE A BELL, BY ANY CHANCE? HM? EH?
NO! NO! NEVER SAW IT BEFORE HONEST!!

...NO...NO, I GUESS NOT ...YOU'RE NOT WITH **THEM**, NOT CONSCIOUSLY, ANYWAY...
UH, WHO'S THEM, ER, THEY...UM?

LOMAX — IF I EVEN BEGAN TO TELL YOU ABOUT **THEM**, YOU'D THINK I WAS PARANOID!
NO! REALLY?
REALLY.


(♪♫♪)

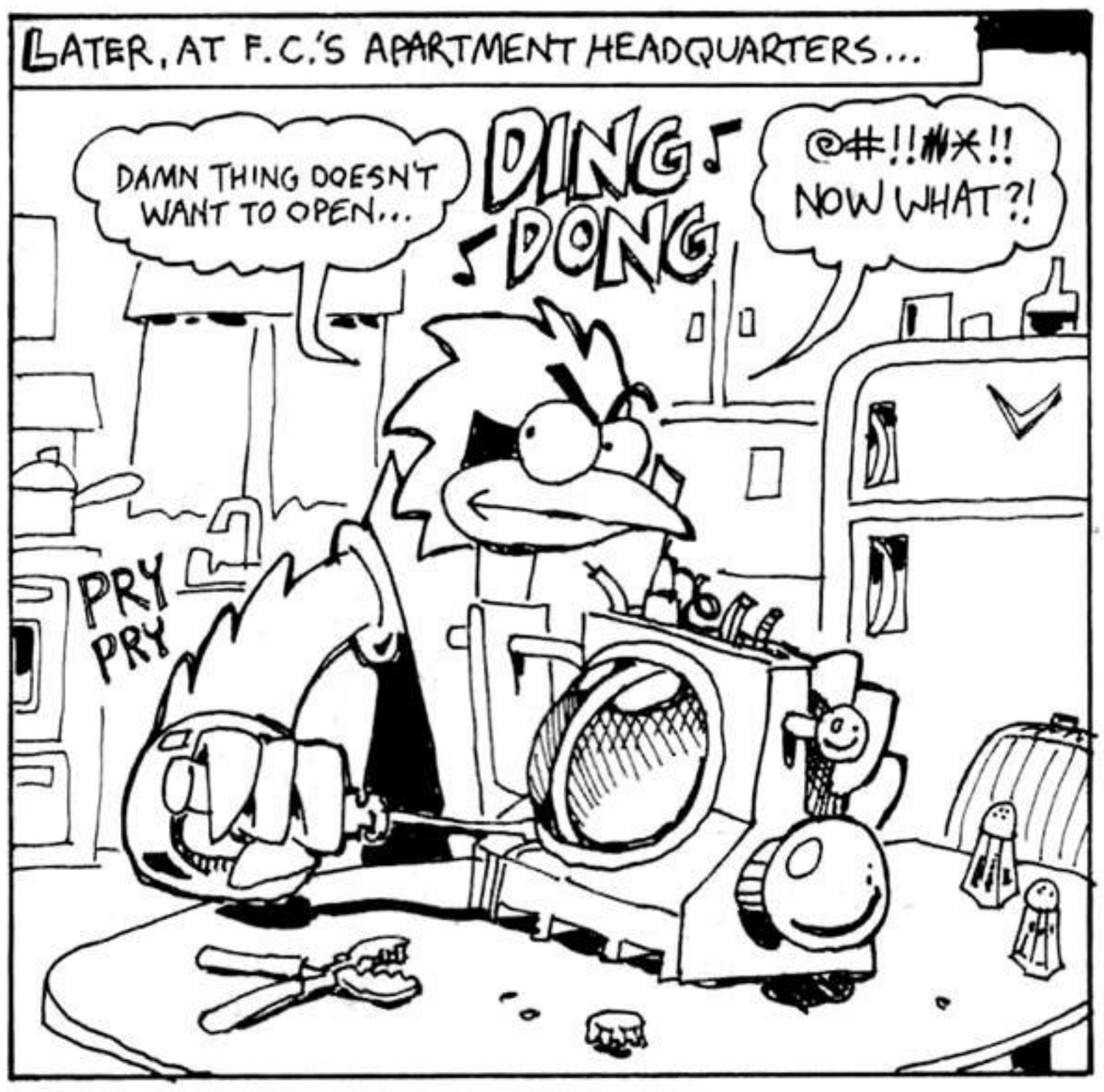
LOOK, WON'T YOU CONSIDER THE TOY DEAL? WE'LL EVEN WORK UP A COMIC-BOOK TIE-IN!!
...WHAT? YOU **DORK!** HERE'S WHAT I THINK OF YOUR CHEESY TOY SCAM!

ZISH
SIZZLE
POOF

MY PROTOTYPES! YOU MELTED MY PROTOTYPES!! I HAD THEM IMPORTED ALL THE WAY FROM TAIWAN!
THERE'S DESTRUCTO DOG DOWN THE CORNER!... GO PESTER HIM!!
JUMP

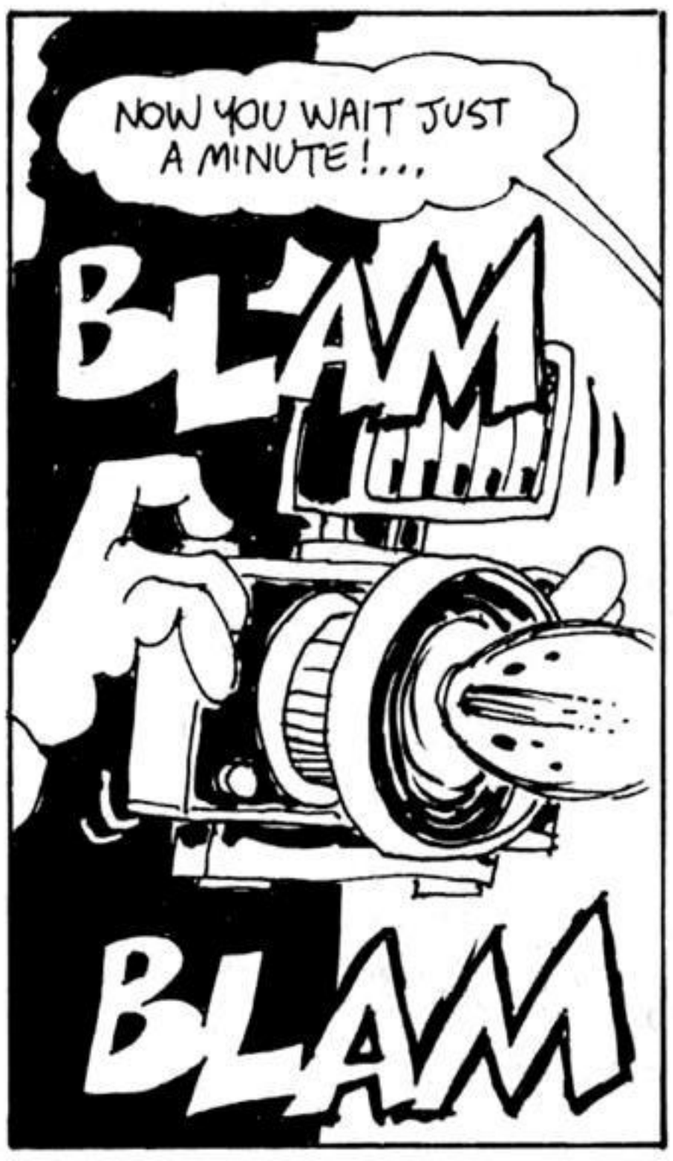
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE WHO HATES MONEY SO MUCH!!
MALL

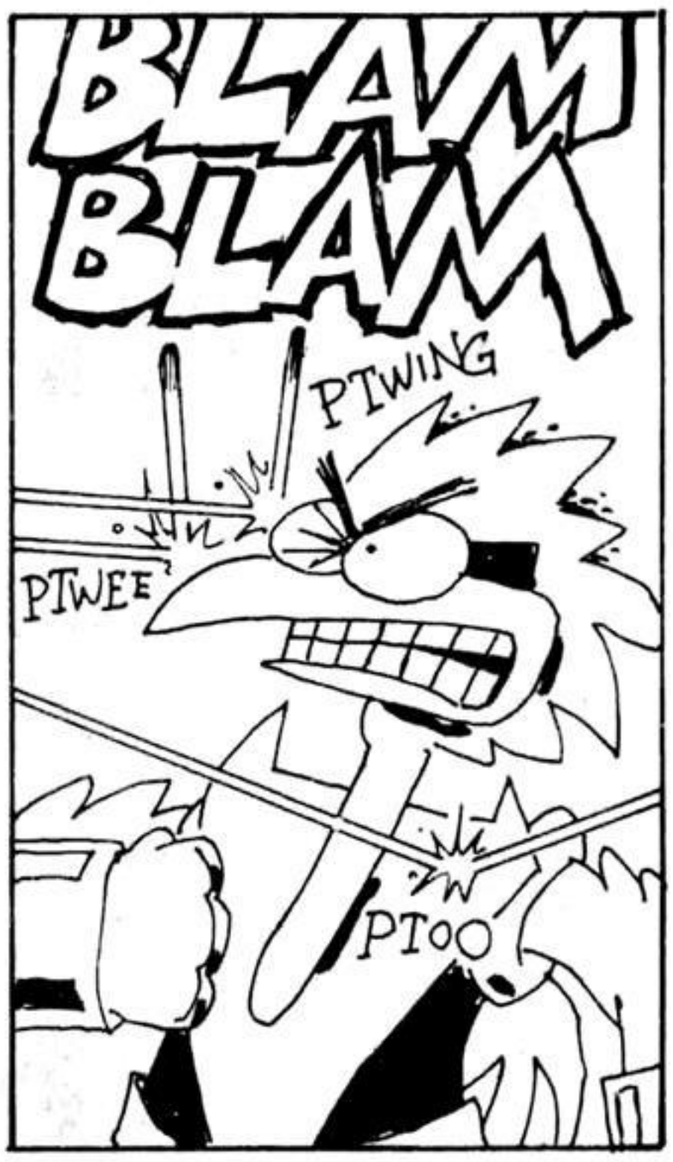
DESTRUCTO DOG? I'M LOMAX LIZARD...
BUS STOP
WEEKLY WHIRL NEWS
CEREBU
SEX CHANGE


LATER, AT F.C.'S APARTMENT HEADQUARTERS...
DAMN THING DOESN'T WANT TO OPEN...
DING DONG
@#!!#*!! NOW WHAT?!
PRY PRY

GOOD MORNING, SIR! I'M FROM Treacle MAGAZINE! ARE YOU FISSION CHICKEN?
YES! LOOK, I'M KIND OF BUSY RIGHT NOW...
COULD I INTERVIEW YOU FOR Treacle MAGAZINE?
DANGER
FISSION CHICKEN 555-2323

WELL, HELL NO! I'M RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF—
JUST A FEW PICTURES FOR Treacle MAGAZINE?


NOW YOU WAIT JUST A MINUTE!...
BLAM
BLAM

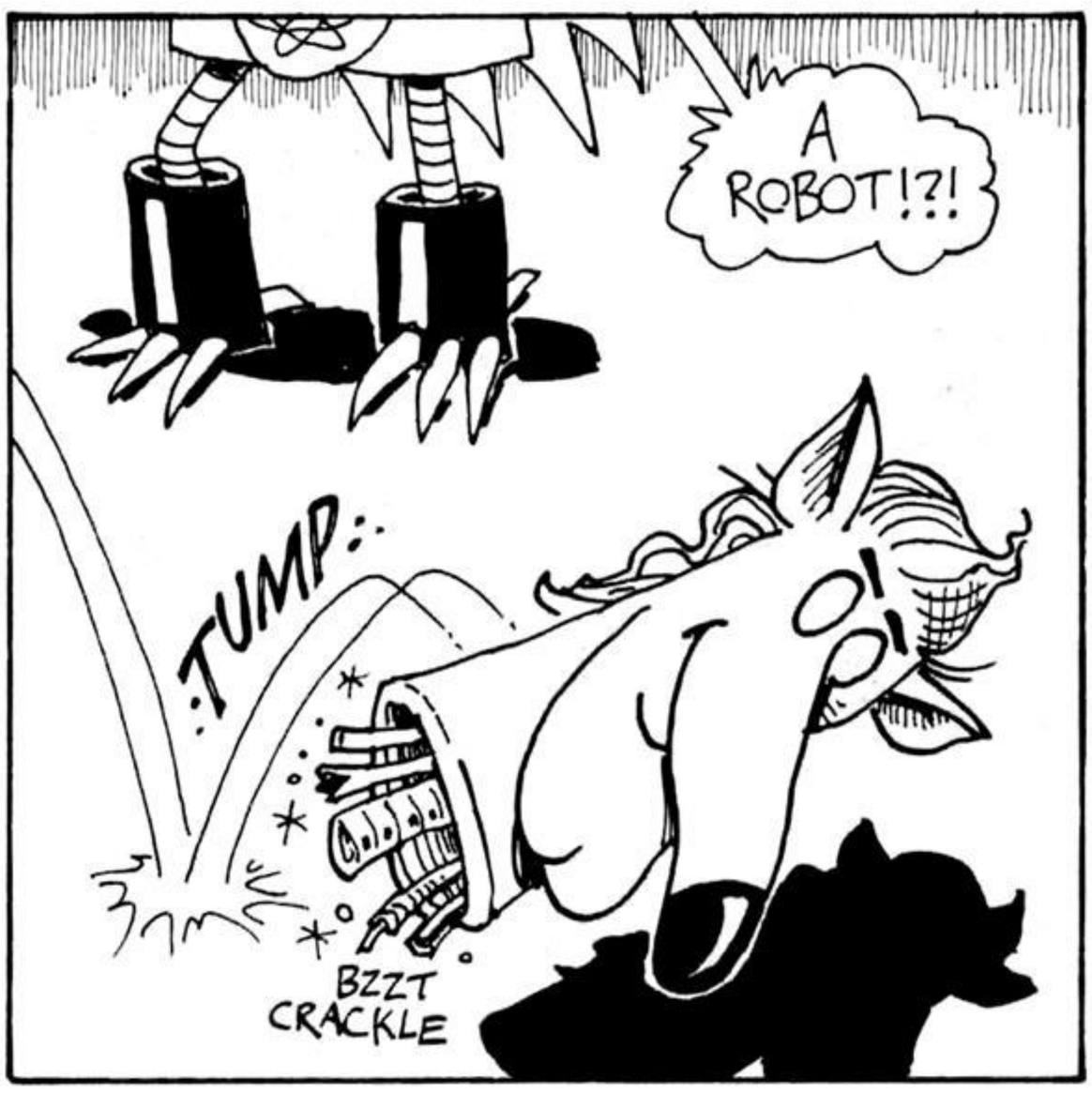

BLAM
BLAM
PTWING
PTWEE
PTOO

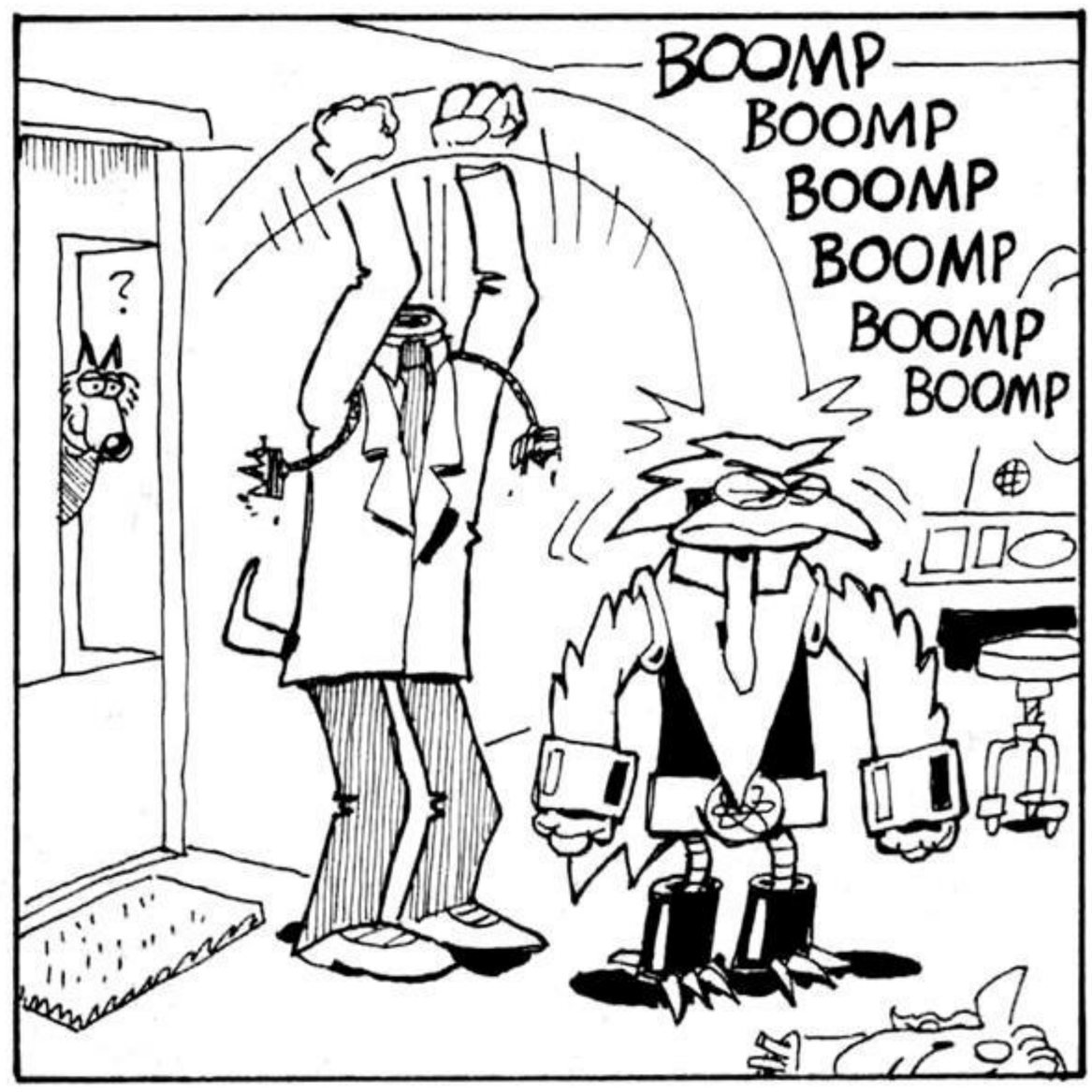
YA WOULD, WOULD YA!
ZAP

CLICK!
FOOSHH

AM
FM

GONG
AHR!


A ROBOT!?!
TUMP
BZZT
CRACKLE


BOOMP
BOOMP
BOOMP
BOOMP
BOOMP
?

FRAK!

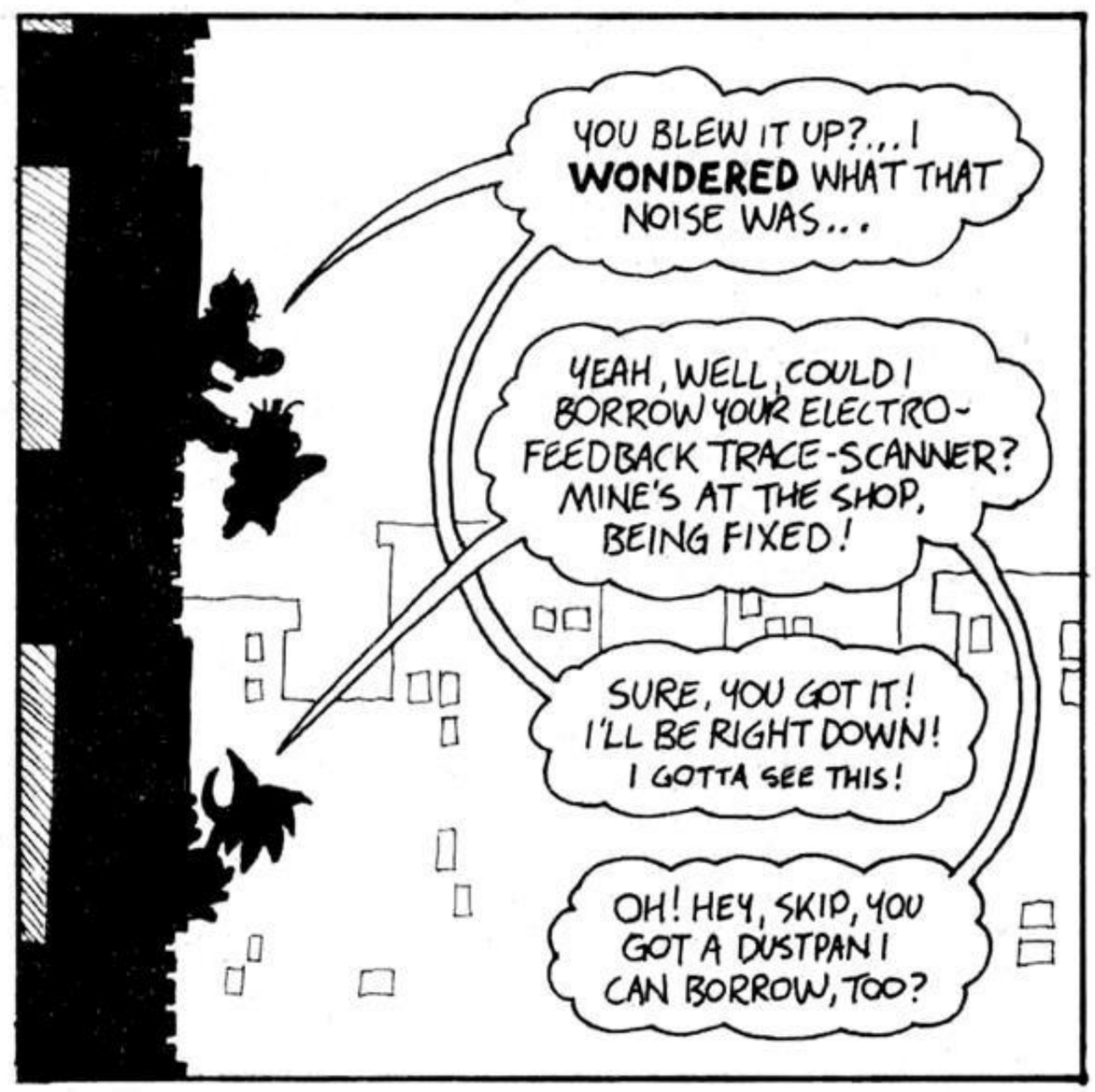
5-2323

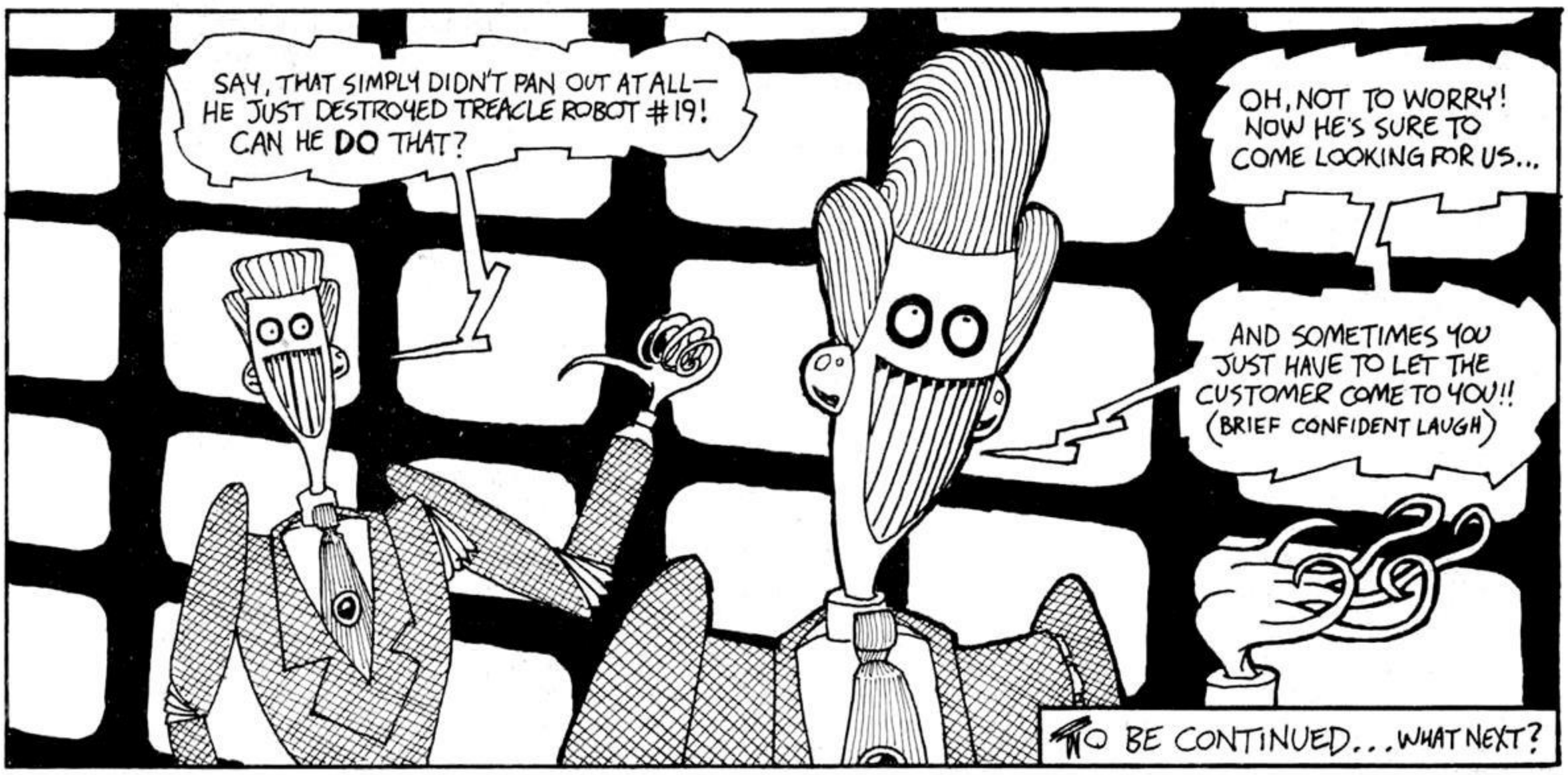
HMMMMMM...
ALAS, POOR YORICK! (YOU JERK)

HEY, SKIP!

YO, FISH! WHAT IS IT?
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS THING!
HEY, IT'S A ROBOT HEAD!!
YEP! AND YOU KNOW WHAT?...
FRED'S SOCKS

...I THINK IT'S FROM THE SAME CREEPS WHO PUT THOSE SCANNER-THINGS IN THE VIDEO BILLBOARDS, LIKE I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT!
YEAH? WHERE'S THE REST OF THE ROBOT? ...WEIRD!
IT'S BY MY FRONT DOOR...IN LITTLE TINY PIECES!


YOU BLEW IT UP?...I WONDERED WHAT THAT NOISE WAS...
YEAH, WELL, COULD I BORROW YOUR ELECTRO-FEEDBACK TRACE-SCANNER? MINE'S AT THE SHOP, BEING FIXED!
SURE, YOU GOT IT! I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN! I GOTTA SEE THIS!
OH! HEY, SKIP, YOU GOT A DUSTPAN I CAN BORROW, TOO?


SAY, THAT SIMPLY DIDN'T PAN OUT AT ALL— HE JUST DESTROYED TREACLE ROBOT #19! CAN HE DO THAT?
OH, NOT TO WORRY! NOW HE'S SURE TO COME LOOKING FOR US...
AND SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO LET THE CUSTOMER COME TO YOU!! (BRIEF CONFIDENT LAUGH)
TO BE CONTINUED...WHAT NEXT?

(CONTINUED FROM INSIDE FRONT COVER)

particular issue, I turned to him. The result can be found beginning on page 13 and it's a hoot. **Sam and Max, Freelance Police #1**, on sale right now, is 10 times longer and therefore at least 10 times as funny, so check your pacemaker before you sit down to read it!

Hey, remember when I used to edit a rag called **Amazing Heroes**? Well, I've wrested control of it back from new editor Kevin Dooley for the space of one issue, and I'm making that issue (#129) into a FUNNY-ANIMAL SPECIAL! Steven A. Gallacci's the cover artist and feature interviewee (and yes, we'll ask him where "Birthright III" is); Freddy Milton is the second interview; there's also an article on the new **Mighty Mouse** cartoon show, a section on why funny-animal cartoonists do what they do, a funny-animal "FirstLook," and much more. Miss it at your peril!

Okay, enough jabbering. (I even had to jump to the back of the book to get it all in.) Enjoy the issue. And remember—**Critters** is the only funny-animal book whose editorials contain more parentheses than periods.

—Kim Thompson

L E T T E R S

To Fantagraphics Books:

Critters #13 arrived in the mail this week, and as usual, it was full of all those good stories I've come to expect over the last year I've been reading **Critters**. I thought "Gnuff" was too **long** and "Birthright" was too short, though. I guess I'm partial toward Steve Gallacci.

I noticed a lot of negative comments in the letter column about issue number #8, so I dug out my copy and read it again—it was okay as far as I'm concerned.

Gary Johnson
New York, NY

See, Noel? It was "okay"! So there!

—KT

Dear K.T.,

Steve Gallacci's "Birthright II" is great! When will "Birthright III" be due?

Zack Mays
Griffin, CA

Well, it's possible there won't BE a "Birthright III," Steve tells me. He may just leave it where it ended last time around. So there. (All screams of protest will be forwarded to Steve, fear not.) Read AMAZING HEROES for full details. Maybe.

Cute drawing. And here I thought all you did was write letters about "Birthright." **—KT**

Greetings from "Down Under";

Let me firstly offer my heartiest congratulations for the success of your magazine. Before encountering **Critters**, I had largely ignored comics as a form of **art**. Steve Gallacci and Stan Sakai soon cured me of all that and I am now a devoted fan of both. Which brings me to my point. "Birthright II" has been ruined for me by being printed on the new, lower grade paper. One of the strong points of Steve's art is the delicate shading and textures which he adds to the brushed figures, and this has been almost totally lost on the grayer shade of paper. Since **Usagi Yojimbo** is now coming out as a hardback collection, may I please put in my vote for the same sort of treatment for "Birthright" and "Birthright II"?

Paul Kidd
Melbourne, Australia

Sure. Personally, I sort of enjoy the way the grayer paper softens up Gallacci's shades, but since I'm the Mr. Moneybags who decided on the cheaper paper, my opinion on this matter might be suspect. We may be experimenting with yet a third kind of paper soon, somewhere between the stock we're using now and the stock we used to use. **—KT**

MIKE ROYAL

Dear People,

Say, "Birthright" is a **really** interesting story...Everything uprooted...Actions in disarray... Time flowing sideways...So puzzling. (Hee hee). [*Okay, okay, I'm sorry about the damn pages being run out of damn order already.* **—KT**] Seriously, though, it's a shame some folks insist on playing armchair casting director when they seek entertainment. I don't quite understand their argument, though—Is it that "funny animals should know their place" or "Don't peddle soup in a can labeled fruit cocktail"?

"Fission Chicken" was great—Timing, delivery...Just perfect. There will be more. And a quick stroll through Nostalgia Park... Anybody remember **No Ducks**?

No? Oh well. Whine. Whine. Whine.

Mike Royal
Los Angeles, CA

And snivel, snivel, snivel back at you too. Sure, I remember NO DUCKS. Doesn't everyone? Hope you like this new "Fission Chicken" story. You wouldn't believe the crap I've had to put up with here at Fantagraphics Manor to get the thing into print. Sometimes it's tough being years ahead of the pack.

Thanks for the drawing. I hope the delicate tones you used on it reproduce on this lousy paper. Only kidding. The paper is fine, folks, really. **—KT**

ZACK MAYS

Dear Kim and fellow **Critters** readers,

Hoo-boy! I didn't think my

"inky" comment would cause such a stir. I assure you that it was meant in good humor to some of my penciler friends out there. I'm sorry if I offended Mr. Alexander. Broad generalizations of groups of people is not the smart way to go—a lesson I have learned, and so should Mr. Wagner in his stereotyping of **Elfquest** fans—Steve Gallacci, myself, and Wendy and Richard Pini happen to be friends.

And just to show I'm a good sport about all this, enclosed are two drawings: one in pencil, and one in ink. The pencil is Shannon, one of my "in the works" characters; the other is, of course, Cap'n Jack and my lady, Felicia. For the interested, the pencilling **was** done by Mike Kazaleh. What a guy!

I won't say what I know behind the ending of "Birthright II," but if you're looking for anything more of the adventures of young Prince Alfon, it may be a long while. But then again, who knows—**I'm** not telling.

Sincerely,

Mike Higgs
Fantasy Studios
Terre Haute, IN

MIKE HIGGS

Everyone seems to have some kind of opinion or inside track on "Birthright III," doesn't he? Thanks for the drawings—I'm reproducing only one of them, the Shannon one, because I'd like to encourage people to do their OWN stuff rather than borrowing other cartoonists' characters. Also, your inking is a little on the undistinguished side, especially when one compares it to Mike Kazaleh's graceful brush strokes. Try again! **—KT**

Dear Kim,

Here are the Noodle Awards for **Critters** (up to **#16**):

BEST ISSUE: 12
WORST ISSUE: 8
BEST STORY: "SpeakingStone" and "Birthright" (tie)
WORST STORY: "Firecracker Jack"
BEST COVER: all Ken Macklin's
WORST COVER: all Stan Sakai's (no 'fense Stan)
BEST IDEA: Printing fans' artwork
WORST IDEA: lack of new artists
idiosynchronous trait: being a true anthology by never having all of one type of story/artwork/artist/theme set
SPECIAL CREDIT TO: Kim Thompson, for holding it all together.

Noel Tominack
Indian Head, MO

Thanks for the memories. As for the "worst idea" being the lack of new artists, I beg to differ, Noel. Just in the last seven issues covered in your "survey," issue #11 introduced Ron Wilber and J. Holland; #12 introduced Reed Waller and Kate Worley; #15 spotlighted TWO new artists (Tim Fuller and J.P. Morgan), while last issue premiered Jim Engel and this one does the same for Steve Purcell. That's six new people or teams in seven issues—and I've got work on hand from two more CRITTERS "virgins," Bob Conway and William Van Horn, among others.

If you mean brand new artists rather than just new to CRITTERS. . . well, all I can say is that anyone who comes along and looks half decent I'll snap up in a minute. **—KT**

Dear Kim,

Okay, I am confident that I speak for myself and many others when I saw that we want a "Birthright III." We can't just be left out here with no idea as to what's gonna happen to the Royal Family. I can honestly say that I'm a Gallacci fan, tried and true. So Steve, Kim, or whoever is in charge of these things, PUH-leeez don't leave me in the dark! I want more!

I'm rather surprised that "Birthright II" took such a different turn than that which I had predicted. But then, I had no idea that in the next issue Captain Hiot Ki and company were going to show up. Naturally, the appearance on these "aliens" would disrupt things somewhat. Although I'm not going to make that my excuse for being wrong as to the motives of the Counter-revolution. I had made my predictions after reading the first episode of "Birthright II," remember, so there was lots of room for error.

"Blood From a Stone" was another among the many captivating items that you've published. Holland and Wilbert make a good team. I'm hoping to see a lot more of their stuff in the future.

"Lionheart" is always a good item to flip back to. Everyone needs a little something "cartoony" once in a while.

You made a good point back in issue 16 about the problems facing the independents. In the aftermath of the black-and-white explosion, the publishers are suffering as a result of a reduced consumer demand. The readers are finding that just because something is in black-and-white, it doesn't necessarily make it a "hot" item. (Although to a true fan, whether an item is "hot" or not makes no difference. He/she reads the comic for the sheer enjoyment.) The collectors are being more cautious when buying their comics. They buy the first issue and stop there; it rarely makes a difference if it is good or not. If they don't shoot up in value, most comics are doomed to crash.

ERIC BLUMRICH

And so, a lot of good stuff is suffering out there because of a weak showing in **Overstreet's**. This is wrong for the obvious reason that this "price war" is distracting from the main idea that comics are to be fun, and enjoyed. Comics are not "big business" and are too often looked at as such.

And who suffers? The little guy.

With this letter you'll find a drawing I thought you might like. I thought about giving it a cliche name like "one of the dogs of war" or something like that, but I thought better of it.

As always, keep up the good work!

Eric Blumrich
Fayetteville, TN

Hey, darn fine job there, Eric. Maybe a LITTLE over-rendered (it's tough to make out some of the shapes), but you've got a really nice sense of light and shadow.

As for what happens to the Royal Family—well, MIKE Royal has a letter and piece of artwork in this issue. . . but I guess that's not what you meant, is it? **—KT**

J.P. MORGAN ©'87
FISSION CHICKEN
STANDS READY TO
SMASH EVIL
INTO LITTLE TINY BITS!
HE'S IN Critters!
PUBLISHED BY
FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS!
...RIGHT IN THIS ISSUE!